أشرف السوانح

HAKĪMUL UMMAT
MAULĀNĀ ASHRAF ‘ALĪ THĀNWĪ

A BIOGRAPHY

VOLUME ONE

Translated by
Maulānā Mahomed Mahomedy

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TRANSLATOR’S NOTE

All praises are due to Allāh *taʿālā* alone. Peace and salutations to the most beloved of Allāh’s creation, Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

It is solely through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the prayers of my teachers and seniors that I have been able to complete the translation of *Ashraf as-Sawānih* of Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *quddisa sirruhu*.

While the translation of this book was challenging, it was most enlightening and informative. I make duʿā’ to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable me to imbibe and practise on the exceptional teachings of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *quddisa sirruhu*.

I request the reader and especially our scholars and seniors to inform me of any mistakes and slip ups which they come across in this book. Their valuable suggestions on how to improve on this translation will be most welcomed. I can be contacted via email: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

I make duʿā’ to Allāh *taʿālā* to accept this work, to make it a means for my salvation in this world and the Hereafter, and a source of guidance for the entire world until the day of Resurrection. Āmīn.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

Was salām
Mahomed Mahomedy
4th Muharram al-Harām 1440 A.H.
14 September 2018

INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

I, Ashraf ʿAlī, consider it incorrect to write anything about this biography because it is about myself. However, I consider it necessary to highlight certain points. I am therefore setting aside formalities and presenting the following:

1. There seems to be irresponsibility in writing it because it is about a living person, and is against the practice of the majority of the people of the Tarīqah. The wisdom behind not writing about a living person can be gauged from the following Hadīth:

ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه قال: من كان مستنا فليستن بمن قد مات، فإن الحي لا يؤمن عليه الفتنة.[1]

Ibn Masʿūd radiyallāhu ʿanhu said: If anyone wants to emulate another, he must emulate one who has passed away because the living is not free from temptation.

A biography is by and large written for the purpose of emulation. The above Hadīth can therefore be used as a proof for what I am saying.

I said "the majority of the people of the Tarīqah" because there are some elders who wrote autobiographies, e.g. Jalāl ad-Dīn Suyūtī *rahimahullāh* and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* – as learnt from reliable sources.

2. By overseeing the writing of my own biography, the committing of excesses is reduced because these are normally committed when there is fanaticism with regard to a person. The possibility of such excesses are reduced because the person [myself] can correct and criticize an account or incident. There is no doubt in the importance of this wisdom.

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[1] جمع الفوائد عن رزين.

As for the possible harm mentioned in the above quoted H̲adīth, it can be avoided through constant consciousness of the fact that these conditions [which are written about me] are until the present; Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows what is to happen in the future. Past evidence is not sufficient for the future. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَا تَدْرِيْ نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا

No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow.

والغيب عند الله، وهو أعلم بمن اتقى، والعبرة بالخواتيم

Knowledge of the unseen is known to Allāh taʿālā alone. He knows best the one who is righteous. Consideration is taken of the final end.

I beseech Allāh *taʿālā* for steadfastness and hope for the acceptance of my supplications. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh.

The above wisdom is only applicable if emulation is the purpose of writing this biography, as inferred from the above quoted H̲adīth. But if the purpose is to increase the knowledge of my associates so that it increases their love for me, then it will also not be incorrect in the light of the following H̲adīth:

قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: إذا أخى الرجل الرجل فليسأله عن اسمه واسم أبيه وممن هو فإنه أوصل للمودة.[1]

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: When a person befriends another, he must ask him his name, his father's name and from where he is because this is more likely to engender love.

Now there is no reason to doubt this. Alternatively, if the purpose is to emulate the person in a particular aspect of his life, it will still be permissible provided it is for as long as the person remained in that excellent condition. If he changed later on, he does not deserve emulation. This too is derived from the above quoted H̲adīth.

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[1] رواه الترمذي.

After going through a considerable portion of whatever was written thus far, I gathered another benefit, viz. many issues with regard to the Tarīqah came to the fore in the midst of certain specific incidents. Although these issues could have and have been written separately, these incidents take the position of corroborations for them. In this way, they become clearer and have a greater impact on the self. After all, there must be some reason for the Qur'ān to accompany stories with lessons and admonitions.

3. In the hope that there is no exaggeration or extremism in relating incidents, the author has been verifying them with me and showing them to me after having written them. But this does not preclude any praise or purification which is done out of love. Although I rationally dislike such praise and my modesty cannot tolerate it, I did not alter or change them lest it may hurt his feelings. At the same time, I am fully aware and conscious of my faults.

4. There are details with regard to certain incidents which I too do not recall with certainty either because they occurred a very long time ago or I had not paid particular attention to preserving them in my memory. However, bearing in mind the actual purpose and objective, I overlooked them.

5. If I thought that any person will be offended by making mention of his name in any incident – whether as a praise or dispraise – then his name was not mentioned explicitly. However, I could still err in my thoughts of whether he would be offended or not. I request the person's pardon on such occasions. In the same way, I seek his pardon if I erred in mentioning or not mentioning him.

Thānah Bhawan, district Muzaffar Nagar
Khānqāh Imdādīyyah
Muharram al-Harām 1354 A.H.

FOREWORD

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

سبحانك لا علم لنا إلا ما علمتنا، إنك أنت العليم الحكيم

Our past and latter days scholars always had the practice of writing biographies about their leaders. Many internal and external benefits are given in this regard. Based on these many benefits, a large number of associates expressed the wish to pen the biography of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīm al-Ummah Mujaddid al-Millah Qutb al-Irshād Murshid al-ʿĀlam Imām at-Tarīq Shaykh al-Mashā'ikh Hujjatullāh fī al-Ard Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib Thānwī Hanafī Chishtī Sābirī Imdādī *mudda zilluhum al-ʿālī*. However, there were several obstacles which prevented us from carrying out this request. They are:

1. No one had the time which could be devoted to such a mammoth task.
2. It entails many difficulties.
3. Hadrat himself clearly prohibited any biography to be written about him. He makes mention of this in his bequests which will be quoted later in this book.

These were strong obstacles which prevented us from carrying out this task, and no one having the courage to carry it out.

Coincidentally, Janāb Maulwī Hakīm ʿAbd al-Haqq Khān Sāhib Fatahpūrī, a devoted attendant of Hadrat Wālā, developed a strong urge to draw a detailed list of Hadrat Wālā's written works. He bore every type of financial and physical hardship to fulfil this urge (this list will be provided at its place in this biography). When a list of written works of a scholar is drawn up, it is normal to provide some details about the author himself. This is normally referred to as a Tarjumatul Mu'allif (about the author). The Hakīm Sāhib also felt the need for it, and chose this unworthy person for this task. I offered my apologies but he did not accept despite my ineligibility.

The demand became extremely strong, but the above listed obstacles had to be removed. The solution to the first obstacle was that I had taken a long leave from my specific duties. In this way, a certain amount of free time was now available to me. The second obstacle was solved when a considerable amount of subject matter on H̲ad̲rat Wālā's life was collated from his writings and speeches. H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib helped me a lot in this regard. Moreover, I continued obtaining the counsel and assistance of H̲ad̲rat Wālā himself. The third obstacle was solved by H̲ad̲rat Wālā's own words which the reader must have seen before this foreword.

In short, now that there was a strong demand for such a biography and the obstacles were removed, there remained no excuse. So I commenced the task in Allāh's name. In line with the practice of scholars of including some points about an author when listing his written works, I could have fulfilled the objective by providing a short and concise biography. And this was also my intention. But when a lover starts talking about his beloved, he cannot keep it concise – as is well known to those who know about love. The lengthy narrative which I was obliged to provide could not be realized because H̲ad̲rat Wālā himself continually removed paragraphs at a time. So I could say that this collection is now a balanced biography [neither concise nor too lengthy].

Keeping in line with H̲ad̲rat Wālā's noble name, this biography is titled *Ashraf as-Sawānih̲* (the noblest of biographies) and its historical title is given as *Sīrat Ashraf-e-Zamānah* (the life of the noblest of our era).

Finally, I consider it essential to state that I am an ordinary person who does not know how to write. The reader should therefore focus on the fundamental objective, viz. the pure biography of H̲ad̲rat Wālā, and not at the beauty or ugliness of my writing. This too was my main focus. Or else, an unqualified person like me could not have had the audacity to pick up a pen to write on such an important subject. Since this task was for the scholars, I had to strive much more, bear immense hardships, and the fact of the matter is that I could not fulfil this duty. I now supplicate to Allāh *taʿālā* to pardon my internal and external shortcomings, to accept this biography, make it beneficial, to maintain H̲ad̲rat Wālā with wellbeing, goodness and blessings forever, and to continually

enable the Muslims to derive blessings and benefit from Hadrat Wālā's blessed self. Āmīn.

أحقر الزمن عزيز الحسن عفا عنه الله ذو المنن، وحفظه عن جميع الشرور والفتن ما ظهر منها وما بطن.

'Azīz al-Hasan, *may Allāh pardon him.*
21 Muharram al-Harām 1354 A.H.

NAME AND TITLE

His name is Ashraf ʿAlī. This name was suggested not only before Hadrat Wālā's birth but before he could be conceived by Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Pānīpattī *rahimahullāh*, a well respected and popular personality of his time. Details in this regard will be provided in the discussion on his blessed birth. This name has the blessed coincidence of being the name of a Sahābī (as stated in *al-Isābah*).

This name was initially suggested from Hadrat Wālā's maternal side because Hadrat Hāfiz Murtadā Sāhib had went there and suggested it. Hadrat Wālā's paternal side had suggested the name ʿAbd al-Ghanī, but when the men of Allāh say something, it is as if Allāh has said it. And so, Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib's suggested name became popular, while the latter, ʿAbd al-Ghanī, did not. However, Hadrat Wālā did use it in one of his writings titled, *al-Khutūb al-Mudhībah*, because it was considered more wise to use it on such an occasion. Similarly, Hadrat Wālā's younger brother, was named Akbar ʿAlī by Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib from the maternal side, while he was named Muzaffar from the paternal side.

His title is Hakīm al-Ummah (the specialist physician of the Muslim community) which Allāh *taʿālā* cast in the hearts of all sections of the community since a very long time. This title is well known everywhere. As far as Hadrat Wālā remembers, Maulwī Mirzā Muhammad Baig Sāhib Marhūm, the owner of Mahbūb al-Matābiʿ Printing Press, was the first to write this title in a letter which he addressed to Hadrat Wālā. Thereafter, Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows how it spread and everyone began addressing him by this title. It is said that Mirzā ʿAbd al-Hakīm Sāhib Siyālkautī was the first to use the title Mujaddid Alf Thānī for Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh*. Allāh *taʿālā* then popularized this title for him.

وَاللّٰهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ، وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ

Allāh appoints whomever He wills for His mercy. Allāh is possessor of mighty grace.

NOBLE LINEAGE

Paternal Lineage

Hadrat Wālā is a Fārūqī[1] from his father's side and an ʿAlawī[2] from his mother's side. Anyone desiring additional investigation in this regard may refer to the chapter on bequests. His father's name was ʿAbd al-Haqq. He was an influential and wealthy resident of Thānah Bhawan who possessed a lot of cash and properties. He was very proficient in Persian and adept at writing. Although he was not a qārī, he pronounced the letters of the Qur'ān extremely well. He did not memorize the Qur'ān but his recitation was very fluent and he could even correct those who had memorized it. He was given full authority over a major section of Meerut, and would also take contracts under the permission of the Commiserate. Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him profusely in this business, resulting in thousands of rupees as income which he spent to purchase more properties and for other things which needed monies to be spent.

Hadrat Wālā constantly relates to us that somehow through Allāh-inspired foresight, his father directed him to undertake Islamic studies, and his younger brother, Janāb Munshī Akbar ʿAlī Sāhib Marhūm, to focus on English studies. Hadrat Wālā's brother was appointed as a secretary at Bareilly Municipality where he earned 500 rupees a month. Hadrat Wālā relates that the beautiful manner in which his father nurtured him and the excellent ways in which he carried out his worldly tasks are proofs of his intelligence and wisdom. Moreover, the intelligence and foresight of Hadrat Wālā's forefather, Hadrat [ʿUmar] Fārūq Aʿzam *rahimahullāh*, are universally accepted.

Maternal Lineage

Hadrat Wālā received the treasure of intelligence from his father's side and the treasure of love from his maternal side which is a well-known family whose forefathers were Sufis, the most prominent among them being Hadrat Shāh Shaykh ʿAbd ar-Razzāq Sāhib Jhanjhānwī *rahimahullāh*. The latter's

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[1] A descendant of Hadrat ʿUmar Fārūq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.
[2] A descendant of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

distinguished personality can be gauged from the fact that Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh ʿAbd al-Haqq Sāhib Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* speaks very highly of him in his *Akhbār al-Akhyār,* a book containing biographies of the righteous servants of Allāh.

Hadrat Wālā's respected mother was herself an Allāh-fearing woman who enjoyed special affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*. This was related to Hadrat Wālā from the elders in his family. Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib attests to her intelligence, foresight, understanding and insight. This will be detailed in the discussion on Hadrat Wālā's birth. The knowledge and love of Hadrat Wālā's maternal forefather, Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, are also universally accepted.

Family Legacy

In short, Hadrat Wālā's combination of intelligence and love, or to put it differently, his combination of the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah which is absolutely obvious and well-known today, and due to which the following couplet applies to him enabled Hadrat Wālā to receive this legacy from his paternal and maternal side:

> In one hand he has the goblet of the Sharīʿah and in the other, the weight of love. A worshipper of his desires cannot strike a balance between a goblet and a weight at one and the same time.

The following couplet comes spontaneously to my mind:

> I inhaled the fragrance of the flower on one side, and received a message from my beloved from the other side. I am gone mad because of the spring which came to me from both sides.

A manifestation of the Fārūqī and ʿAlawī peculiarities

In this way, Hadrat Wālā is – Māshā Allāh – a true representative of his family, and a conglomeration and manifestation of the Fārūqī and ʿAlawī peculiarities. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

Why should this not be the case when, after all, it has always been Allāh's norm to confer family honour and noble descent to the one whom He has willed to enjoy a position of instruction and guidance. Allāh *taʿālā* does this so that even people of the

highest strata of society do not consider it below them to follow such a person. This, notwithstanding the fact that there is absolutely no need whatsoever for nobility in order to be accepted in the court of Allāh *taʿālā*. He says in this regard:

فَاِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّوْرِ فَلَا اَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَّلَا يَتَسَائَلُوْنَ

Then when the trumpet is blown, neither will there be any kinship on that day nor will they ask about one another.[1]

اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَتْقٰكُمْ

Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you.[2]

This is also the advantage of being born in a wealthy family. That is, people of the upper classes do not consider it below their dignity to emulate such a person. Moreover, the person himself does not feel intimidated by anyone of authority and is able to carry out his programme of rectification freely with all types of people. Consequently, Hadrat Wālā used to say with absolute independence:

> By Allāh's grace I am not affected in the least by the authority and external influence of the most influential of people. This is because I think to myself: "He is not wealthy in the least. After all, we too eat and drink at home by Allāh's grace. We too are not the children of any pauper." All praise is due to Allāh, I lived a life of real comfort and spent thousands of rupees with my own hands. Now I do not have any regret with regard to wealth and possessions whereby I have to look at wealthy people with a longing gaze. Once a person's self is filled and satisfied with things, the natural consequence of it is that no greed and avarice whatsoever remains in him."

Hadrat Wālā's peculiar trait of independence is also one of the reasons why he is one of the most well-known and unique personalities of his time, although the essential reason for it is

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[1] Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 101.
[2] Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 13.

his strong bond with Allāh *taʿālā*. Quite often, wealthy and affluent people get caught up in their greed and insatiability.

To sum up: Allāh *taʿālā* had decided to confer Hadrat Wālā with the high position of rectification and instruction. This is why He honoured him with phenomenal intelligence and perfect love on one side, and the treasures of a noble lineage, position and family affluence on the other side.

Hadrat Wālā's Maternal Grandfather

It would be appropriate to say something about Hadrat Wālā's maternal grandfather, Pīrjī Najābat ʿAlī Sāhib. He was proficient in the Persian language, poetry and writing. He was known for relating humorous anecdotes, his sharp mind and witticism. He held the position of an advocate at Kanjpūrah. He had pledged bayʿah to a special khalīfah of Maulānā Shāh Niyāz Ahmad Sāhib Barelwī, and had a lot of faith and confidence in Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib Pānīpattī *rahimahullāh*. A deep and special bond existed between the two. Although the latter was a majdhūb, he paid special attention to his training. When Pīrjī Sāhib commenced the path of Sufism and was overcome by dhikr and other spiritual practices, he began disregarding his family and work. Hadrat Wālā's grandmother complained about it, so Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib took away this condition through his focus. Pīrjī Sāhib was most grieved by this and, despite the close bond which existed between the two, he began using harsh words against him. For example, he referred to him as a thief and robber. But Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib did not bother in the least. He did what he had to and continued on his way. Pīrjī Sāhib also settled down and became occupied in his work once again.

When Pīrjī Sāhib was about to leave this world, Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib appeared suddenly. He proceeded directly to his deathbed and said: "Najābat ʿAlī, look at me." The moment Pīrjī turned and looked at him, his previous spiritual condition returned to him and he departed joyfully from this world.

Maternal Uncle

Hadrat Wālā's maternal uncle, Pīrjī Imdād ʿAlī Sāhib, was also a man of powerful spiritual conditions and intense love for Allāh *taʿālā*. At times he would be overcome by this love and do things which were not appropriate for the general good. Hadrat

Wālā himself says that it seemed as if a fire was emanating from his words and the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* could be applied to him:

> I am slave to those things which ignite a fire. So do not pour cold water over a blazing fire.

Hadrat Hāfiz Murtadā Sāhib also had an influence on him. He had a totally carefree temperament in the beginning. He became fed up looking for a source of income and came to Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib one day and said: "You either devote me totally to this world or totally to Dīn. I do not want this in-between condition." Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib responded heatedly: "Go, go to Hyderabad. Go, the Nawāb Sāhib is calling you."

Pīrjī Sāhib was most disturbed at hearing this and said: "Oh, it seems I have received nothing but this world. What a foolish thing I did! I should not have even mentioned the world. I ought to have sought the Dīn alone. Anyway, whatever was bound to happen has happened. This is my lot."

He assumed he will earn a livelihood by going to the region of the Nawāb of Hyderabad. So he reached there in search of a job and also found one. However, true love for Allāh *ta'ālā* was naturally embedded in him and his heart pained out of His love from the very beginning. So even while occupied in his job, he was searching for a shaykh. To this end, he went and met most of the Sufis of Hyderabad but was not attracted to most of them because they spoke ill of Hadrat Maulānā Ismā'īl Sāhib Shahīd *rahimahullāh* while Pīrjī had immense faith and confidence in him. He loved the fact that Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* sacrificed his life and honour for Allāh's sake while some people could not abstain from this world – a quality which was a special trait in Pīrjī. He eventually went to Mirzā Sardār Baig Sāhib who had been a senior chief and a well known Nawāb. He gave up all these positions and adopted the life of a dervish. He underwent a lot of spiritual exertion and abstinence from this world. Pīrjī's heart was very attracted to him, but as a precaution, he wrote a letter to Pīr Ahmad Sāhib who was the son of Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib and said: "There are a few Sufis here. Ask Hāfiz Sāhib and inform me which of them I should refer to."

When Hāfiz Sāhib was asked, he did not give any verbal reply. Instead, he removed the blanket which was wrapped around

him, burnt it, and sat down aloof from everyone. When Pīrjī Sāhib was informed of this, he did not understand it. When he presented himself before Mirzā Sāhib, the latter said in the course of their general discussion: "Just as a person is taught and instructed verbally, he is also instructed through actions." He then related the story of the parrot which is mentioned in the *Mathnawī*. The parrot made itself to appear dead, and in this way instructed the other parrots to do the same if they wanted freedom.

The moment Pīrjī Sāhib heard this story, his mind went immediately to Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib and the burning of his blanket. He deduced from the practical demonstration that he must pledge bayʿah to such a person who has divested himself of all worldly engagements. There was no one apart from Mirzā Sāhib in this area. No sooner this thought entered his mind, the fire of love for Mirzā Sāhib ignited in his heart and he pledged allegiance to him after much persistence from his side and refusal from Mirzā Sāhib.

Great Grandfather

Although this subject is becoming quite lengthy, I feel that if important incidents and events concerning certain elders of the family are not related, we will not be able to gain sufficient insight into the subject of "noble descent". I consider it fitting to relate an incident which took place with Hadrat Wālā's great grandfather, Muhammad Farīd Sāhib, and to relate something about his forefather, Hadrat Sultan Shihāb ad-Dīn ʿAlī, well known as Farkh Shāh Kābulī.

Hadrat Wālā's great grandfather was martyred in the area between Kīrānah and Shāmlī, and was buried near the grave of Shaykh Samā' ad-Dīn Sāhib. In the beginning, an ʿurs used to be celebrated for him. He was accompanying a marriage party when some robbers attacked the entire entourage. Hadrat Wālā's great grandfather was carrying a bow and arrows. He began shooting arrows towards the thieves. But they were in large numbers while the marriage party was ill-equipped. He was martyred in this exchange and became a manifestation of the following Hadīth:

من قتل دون ماله فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون دمه فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون أهله فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون مظلمته فهو شهيد.[1]

The one who is killed in the defence of his wealth is a martyr. The one who is killed in the defence of his life is a martyr. The one who is killed in the defence of his family is a martyr. The one who is killed in the defence of an injustice which was committed against him is a martyr.

A strange incident occurred after his martyrdom. He came at night to his family like a living person, offered them sweetmeats and said: "If you do not inform anyone of this, I will come like this daily to you." But his family feared that the rest of the family will have certain suspicions if they saw their children eating sweetmeats, so they related it to others. He did not come back. This incident is well known in the family.

Forefather, Hadrat Farkh Shāh

The elders of Thānah Bhawan, Hadrat Shaykh Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Shaykh Jalāl ad-Dīn Thānesarī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shaykh Farīd ad-Dīn Ganj Shakkar *rahimahullāh* are all from the progeny of Sultan Shihāb ad-Dīn, known as Farkh Shāh Kābulī. Their affiliation with him is mentioned in *Zubdatul Maqāmāt*.

Sultan Shihāb ad-Dīn 'Alī is from among the senior spiritual masters. His title is Farkh Shāh. He was a governor of Kabul before joining the ranks of the Sufis. With the fall of the Ghaznawī Sultanate, he came to India with a large army on several occasions for the sake of propagating Islam, waging jihād and putting an end to idol worship. He was victorious and returned to Kabul with large amounts of booty. Through Allāh's kindness, he eventually turned to Sufism, joined the Tarīqah 'Āliyah Chishtīyyah, benefited from its masters and reached a level of perfection. An entire world was irrigated from his fountain of blessings.

After giving up the sultanate and choosing a life of a Sufi, he spent the rest of his days in Kabul where he occupied himself in conveying his blessings and teachings to Allāh's creation, and was buried there after his demise. To this day, the place

[1] جمع الفوائد.

where he is buried is well known as Darah Farkh Shāh, and his blessed grave is visited by all types of people.

A Family Which Combined Sufism With Royalty

From the previously related incidents and details, the reader must have gauged that as regards the internal and external, Hadrat's paternal and maternal families and forefathers had affiliations with the royalty, and combined royalty with Sufism. And based on the saying:

الولد سر لأبيه

A child maintains the secrets of his forefathers.

Hadrat possessed both traits and characteristics, one in the form of submission, servitude, self-obliteration and humbleness; and the other in the from of awe, excellent planning and organization and independence. All of which were manifested to perfection in him. The following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* was applicable to him:

> O beloved! Royal effulgence is glittering on your face and your thoughts conceal countless wisdoms of Allāh.
>
> May Allāh bless you in your pen for it is open for the supremacy of Dīn. A single black drop [of ink] gives rise to the gushing forth of thousands of springs of immortality.

When I see Hadrat Wālā's comprehensive nature, I spontaneously recall this couplet:

> I may be a slave of the tavern, but when I am intoxicated, I vex my pride over the heavens and impose my rule over the stars.

In short, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā did not only possess personal merits, but was also of noble descent and belonged to a distinguished family. All praise is due to Allāh. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

Note: I had stated that Hadrat Wālā inherited the treasures of intelligence from his paternal side and of love from his maternal side. This refers to his natural capabilities which remain dormant and only become active through the blessings

of a spiritual mentor. Through his blessings all types of righteous capabilities come to the fore and are passed on to others. However, a natural capability is in itself a great bounty and gift from Allāh *taʿālā*, and is a basis for all future merits and excellences. Furthermore, it is not effective without the instruction and tutoring of a spiritual mentor. As a poet says:

> There is no difference of opinion as regards the natural pleasantness of rain. However, in an orchard flowers bloom through it, while in a brackish land, you get brushwood and thorns.

I considered it necessary to make mention of this natural capability in the discussion on Hadrat Wālā's noble descent.

HOMETOWN

Thānah Bhawan

Hadrat Wālā's beloved hometown is Thānah Bhawan which falls under the district of Muzaffar Nagar. Its original name was Thānah Bhīm because it was a "thāna" (sub-police station) of Rajah Bhīm at some time in its history. It came to be known as Thānah Bhawan through constant usage. When Muslims came and inhabited this place, the forefathers of some of the noblemen named it Muhammad Pūr after one of their children whose name was Fath Muhammad. This name is found in the royal documents. But it is generally known by its old name of Thānah Bhawan. Long before the Indian Mutiny, it had a population of forty eight thousand. Shortly before the Mutiny, it dropped to thirty six thousand. Now there are only six to seven thousand residents. The effects of the Mutiny reached Thānah Bhawan in Muharram 1274 A.H.

A Historical Town

Thānah Bhawan is a popular and well known historical town of Agra and Oudh. It was always inhabited by noble Muslim families, especially the elders of Farūqī lineage who enjoyed power, influence and owned properties. Although there is more poverty at present, by Allāh's grace there are still a few influential personalities. People of various arts and crafts lived here. Stories of their achievements are found in books and spoken about to this day. Very senior officials and property owners also lived here during the era of the kings.

A Land Of Scholars

The intelligentsia are particularly well known here. An Englishman who was an officer-in-charge presented a report about the residents of various towns. When it came to the residents of Thānah Bhawan, he referred to them by the title of "the intelligentsia of Thānah". To the best of my knowledge, no other region of India enjoys as many towns which are inhabited by the Muslim nobility. Towns such as Gangoh, Kīrānah, Jhanjhān, Kāndhla, Pānīpat, etc. The religiosity and concern for Islamic knowledge which is observed in this region is not seen anywhere else. The large numbers of erudite 'ulamā',

scholars and Sufis who lived in this region and are living at present are not found anywhere else.

Shaykh Maʿshūq ʿAlī Sāhib was a religious, intelligent and sharp-minded personality of Qanūj. He said to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion: "The people of this region have surpassed the people of our area in every field. The learned of this region are better than those of my area. The ignorant ones of this region are better than those of my area. In fact, even the unbelievers of this region are better than those of my area." Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib's *rahimahullāh* couplet seems to apply here:

> Even though the hawk may occasionally place a hat on its head, the birds of the Caucasus mountains know fully well what the royal protocol is.

Hadrat Wālā's Paternal And Maternal Hometown

Hadrat Wālā's paternal and maternal families are both from Thānah Bhawan. His maternal forefathers first lived in Jhanjhānah. The father of Hadrat Wāla's maternal grandfather then came and settled down in Thānah Bhawan. From his paternal forefathers, mention is made of Maulānā Sadr Jahān, a contemporary of Qādī Muhammad Nasrullāh Khān, in documents which were recorded during the rule of King Akbar. His forefathers moved from Thānesar, district Karnāl, and settled down in Thānah Bhawan. Before coming to Thānesar, they lived in Ghaznīn and Kabul. Their lineage goes up to Farkh Shāh Kābulī about whom some details were provided in the previous chapter.

BIRTH

Date Of Birth

Hadrat Wālā was born on 5 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1280 A.H. on a Wednesday at the time of true dawn. Coincidentally, the writing of this biography commenced this year on the 5th of Rabīʿ ath-Thānī on a Wednesday. All praise is due to Allāh, Hadrat Wālā turned seventy three on this day. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless him with an extraordinary long life with external and internal blessings, with eternal good health and wellbeing. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable his shadow of affection to remain over the followers of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for a long time. Āmīn.

Place Of Birth

Hadrat Wālā was born in the house of his maternal family which is in the Khayl district [of Thānah Bhawan] and is now in the share of the children of Pīrjī Shaukat ʿAlī Sāhib Marhūm.

Incident Of His Birth

The incident of Hadrat Wālā's birth is most strange and unique, and is quite well known in the family. Hadrat Wālā heard it personally from the elders of the family and from those who were present, and penned it.

Hadrat Wālā's father fell ill and suffered from severe scabies. No medication was of any help. A doctor informed him that an elixir would help, but its side effect is that it would prevent one from having children. His illness had really taken its toll on him and he decided to take the medication thinking to himself that survival of one's own self takes precedence over survival of one's progeny. When Hadrat Wālā's mother came to know of this, she was quite disturbed because no male offspring survived till that point. Hadrat Wālā's maternal grandmother eventually came to learn about it and she too became worried. She complained to Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib Majdhūb Pānīpattī (who, coincidentally had come to visit her husband). She said to him: "Hadrat, no male offspring survives from this daughter of mine." Hāfiz Sāhib said by way of an

allusion: “They die because of the conflict between ʿUmar and ʿAlī. Now is the turn for ʿAlī, and the child will survive.”

No one understood the allusion at the time but Hadrat Wālā’s mother understood it by virtue of her Allāh-bestowed intelligence and insight, and solved the puzzle. She said: “What Hāfiz Sāhib means is that the father is a Fārūqī and the mother is an ʿAlawī. Till now, the male children who were born were named from the father’s side, e.g. Fadl Haq, etc. Now when a child is born, he must be given a name from the mother’s side, and it must end with ʿAlī.” When Hāfiz Sāhib heard this, he laughed and said: “This is really what I had meant. This woman appears to be extremely intelligent.”

Hāfiz Sāhib added: “Inshā Allāh, she will give birth to two sons and they will survive. You must name one Ashraf ʿAlī Khān and the other, Akbar ʿAlī Khān.” When giving these names, he added the appellation of Khān from his side. So someone asked: “Hadrat, will these boys be Pathāns?” He replied: “No. You must name them Ashraf ʿAlī and Akbar ʿAlī.” He also said: “Both will be wealthy. One of them will be mine – he will be a maulwī and a hāfiz; the other will be religious.”

All these predictions proved to be absolutely true. Hadrat Wālā says: “Occasionally you hear me making disjointed statements. This is the effect of Majdhūb Sāhib’s spiritual focus through whose supplications I was born. I have a liberal temperament like majdhūb’s,[1] I cannot bear complicated and confusing issues.”

A Childhood Dream

Hadrat Wālā writes about a dream which he saw during his student days. It concerns Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib’s spiritual focus. I feel I should quote it here:

I dreamt of an elderly man during my student days at Deoband. He asked me: “How old are you, and when will the next year of your age commence?” I told him my age and informed him that it will be on 5th Rabīʿ ath-Thānī. He said: “If you fast two days before the arrival of that date, you will experience much blessings.” I did what he said and followed

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[1] A majdhūb is one who is lost and immersed in the meditation of Allāh *taʿālā*. He appears like a mad man.

this practice for several years, but eventually became lazy. In one of those years, I did fast, but I think I kept only one fast. I related this dream to an elder in my family. He asked me to describe the one whom I had seen in my dream. When I described the man to him, he said: "You had dreamt of Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib." He was a mujdhūb but a pure personality who was spoken about in glowing terms by the spiritual masters. Even Hadrat Murshidī Hājī Sāhib[1] *qaddasallāhu sirrahu* spoke highly of him."

The strange incident of Hadrat Wālā's birth is a clear example and manifestation of Allāh's words:

وَاصْطَنَعْتُكَ لِنَفْسِيْ

I selected you for Myself.

All other aspects of Hadrat Wālā's biography are details and testimonies of this.

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[1] Reference is made to Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

CHILDHOOD

Hadrat Wālā's Foster Mother

Hadrat Wālā's younger brother was born just fourteen months after Hadrat Wālā's birth, so the milk was not enough for both. A foster mother was obtained for Hadrat Wālā. She was from a village of Meerut and was a merciless person. Consequently, Hadrat Wālā used to say jokingly: "I drank the milk of a merciless women, this is why there is some sharpness in my temperament. But – all praise is due to Allāh – there is no severity in my temperament. My heart is so soft that I cannot see the slightest discomfort in anyone. If I see the slightest discomfort in anyone, my heart melts and goes out to him." Hadrat Wālā tried his utmost to enquire about his foster mother's children so that he could maintain relations with them but he could not establish their whereabouts. His concern for them was based on a natural bond and in emulation of the Sunnah.

Mother's Demise

Hadrat Wālā was only about five years old when the affectionate shadow of his mother was lifted from him. Hadrat Wālā says: "I cannot recall my mother's face and appearance fully, but whenever I think of her, I can recall her sitting at the foot of her bed. This particular scene has remained in my mind. I cannot recall anything else because I was very young. I was just four or five years old."

Father's Affection

Hadrat Wālā says: "After my mother passed away, my father took care of us [both brothers] with real love and affection. For breakfast he used to feed us a special rotī with ghee, make it into tiny morsels and feed it to us with his own hands. He took care of us with such love that he even made us forget the grief of our mother's departure. He showed us more love than our mother. Despite his quick temperament, he rarely became angry at us. He brought us up with many comforts and luxuries. He was especially soft and affectionate towards me. So much so that my aunt asked him: 'How is it that when the boys are mischievous, you hit the younger one more. I rarely

see you hitting the elder one.' He replied: 'First of all, it is the younger one who teaches him all the mischief. Secondly, he learns his lessons while the younger one doesn't. This is why I love him more.'"

"In short, very rarely did he give me a hiding, and rarely did I receive a hiding from my teachers. In fact, it was almost non-existent because I used to learn my lessons and was well-mannered. If we were ever offended by our father's anger, we would abstain from eating. If he asked us the reason for not eating, we would reply that we were not hungry. He would immediately call for his small box, give us one rupee each and say: 'Here, take this. You will feel hungry now.' We would become happy and join in the meal.'"

Training

It was a practice to distribute sweetmeats in the musjid when the Qur'ān was completed in the tarāwīh salāh. My father would never permit us to take part in this. Instead, he would personally go on that day to the shops, purchase sweetmeats and give us far more than what we would have received in the musjid. He used to say: "It is most undignified to go to the musjid to receive sweetmeats." This was the excellent manner in which he used to save us from greed and teach us the lesson of self-respect and dignity.

I was engaged in a casual conversation with my father when I was still a student. In the course of the conversation, I unwittingly said about Hadrat Maulānā Rafī' ad-Dīn Sāhib – the ex-principal of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband: "Maulānā is not well-read." This was a fact because Maulānā did not study too much of the external sciences. Yes, he was a good administrator and a pious personality. But when my father heard my statement, he became angry and reprimanded me saying: "Does anyone ever say such things about the pious personalities?!" He became so angry that he got up to come and hit me, but he did not. In this way, he was very vigilant about our character. At the same time, he showed us extreme love and affection.

Highest Level Of Intelligence

Hadrat Wālā's intelligence was clearly visible even during his childhood days of mischief. He was able to think up and

contrive innovative ways. He himself relates: "It was the monsoon season but the rains were falling intermittently. Our bedsteads used to remain outside. When it started to rain, they were brought indoors. When the rain stopped, they were taken outside. My mother had passed away, and it was only my father and we two brothers who were living in the house. All our three bedsteads used to be placed next to each other. One day, I took a rope and tied the legs of each bedstead with the legs of the one next to it. When it started to rain at night, my father began dragging a bedstead inside. But whichever one he pulled, the other two would be dragged in the process. He tried to untie the ropes but they were not getting untied because I had tied them extremely tight. He wanted to cut off the ropes, but could not find a knife. In short, he was really vexed and the legs were eventually undone after a lot of effort. The bedsteads were then brought indoors. This entire process took very long, causing the bedsteads to be drenched. My father was very angry by this stupid act."

This happened when Hadrat Wālā was very young. He recalls another incident which occurred after he completed memorizing the Qur'ān. There was a blind hāfiz who knew the Qur'ān very well and was quite proud about it. Before Hadrat Wālā could reach the age of maturity, he used to read the Qur'ān to him in optional salāh. He was revising the Qur'ān with him in one of the days of Ramadān. In the course of revising it to him, Hadrat Wālā warned him saying: "Hāfizjī, I will deceive you today, and I am even telling you that I will deceive you in such and such verse." The Hāfizjī said: "Hey Miyā! Where will you ever be able to bluff me. Many senior memorizers of the Qur'ān could not bluff and deceive me."

Hadrat Wālā stood up and commenced the salāh. When he reached the following verse:

اِنَّمَا اَنْتَ مُنْذِرٌ وَّلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ

He read it extremely slowly, as is his norm when he is approaching the end of his recitation and is about to go into rukūʿ. Then when he was about to read the next verse, which reads: *Allāhu yaʿlamu…* he elongated the word "Allāh" as if he was about to go into rukūʿ and was actually going to say the takbīr, *Allāhu Akbar*. The Hāfizjī assumed Hadrat Wālā was going into rukūʿ, so he went immediately into rukū'. In the

meantime, Hadrat Wālā continued with the recitation: *Allāhu ya'lamu mā tahmilu...*So the Hāfizjī was in rukū' while the recitation was carrying on. Hāfizjī stood up immediately from the rukū'. When Hadrat Wālā realized this, he was completely overtaken by laughter and broke his salāh.

Hadrat Wālā's father was sitting at a small distance on his bed and listening to the recitation. He asked what transpired and Hadrat Wālā explained to him. Although his father was serious by nature, he too smiled. Hadrat Wālā knew that when a minor laughs in salāh his wudū' does not break; only the salāh is rendered invalid. So he was about to restart his salāh, but his father stopped him saying: "Not now. Laugh as much as you like first or else you will be overtaken by laughter in your salāh and break your salāh again." His father was a very wise man. When Hadrat Wālā finished laughing to his fill, he restarted his salāh and read that amount of the Qur'ān which was to be completed for that day.

Hadrat Wālā says: "By Allāh's grace, no matter where I lived, I was loved by my relatives and near ones. This, despite my mischievous acts during my childhood. However, I did not commit the filthy mischief as is committed by children of today. So instead of being offended by my mischief, people considered it to be agreeable and acceptable. During Diwali,[1] lamps used to be lit on both sides of the street in Meerut cantonment. My brother and I would walk on either side of the street and put the lamps off by flapping our hankies over the flame. We would start from one end of the street and continue putting them off as we proceeded. No one was offended by this; not even the Hindus."

Enthusiasm For Worship

Hadrat Wālā was most enthusiastic about salāh since childhood. He would even include it in his games. For example, he would gather the shoes of all his friends and line them up in rows, and place one shoe in the front [mimicking the rows of salāh with the imām at front]. He would be happy over the fact that even the shoes are performing salāh. He was also keen about delivering lectures and would imitate others. When he was sent to the shops to buy any item, he had to pass by the

[1] A Hindu celebration.

musjid. He would go into the musjid, proceed directly to the pulpit, and do as if he was delivering a sermon. This would not be during a salāh time, so he would be alone in the musjid. No one would be watching him, so he did not even feel shy. He would give full vent to his enthusiasm and deliver a lecture for as long as he liked. It seemed as if delivering speeches and lectures was his passion since childhood. This too displays Allāh's power.

It shows that Hadrat Wālā was enthusiastic about religious activities since his early days. He studied a few elementary Arabic books when he was extremely young. He was only twelve or thirteen years old when he commenced waking up in the latter part of the night for tahajjud and occupying himself in optional salāh and other devotional practices. His foster mother showed extreme love to him and would prohibit him saying: "O my child! You are still very young." She used to feel very sorry for him. This was especially so during the winter season. She would observe him waking up in the cold winter nights, performing wudū' and occupying himself in tahajjud. The poor woman would feel sorry for him and, out of her extreme love for him, she would remain awake until he completed his tahajjud and devotional practices.

Hadrat Wālā relates: "I developed enthusiasm for Dīn – of which tahajjud is one branch – from remaining in the company of my elementary teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Fath Muhammad Sāhib, who was a blessed personality, a man of close affiliation with Allāh *ta'ālā* and one who was a spiritual master himself." Hadrat Wālā abstained from playing with his peers because he was aware of their evil ways. He used to remain indoors and play with his sister. The other boys did not like his aloofness. They used to walk around with knives with the intention of killing him if they came across him. He used to proceed and return from maktab while accompanied by one of the workers. When the boys insisted on causing mischief to him, it was reported to the police. A policeman summoned Hadrat Wālā and all the boys, took the cane which was in Hadrat Wālā's hand and gave a thorough beating to all the boys. No one had the courage to do anything after that, and Hadrat Wālā's fears were removed.

Delicate Disposition

Hadrat Wālā could not tolerate looking at any person's exposed stomach. He would vomit the moment he set eyes on it. Hadrat Wālā heard about this from the elders in his family. The other boys knew about it, so they would expose their stomachs before him in order to vex him. Hadrat Wālā would be reduced to vomiting and feeling uncomfortable. The effects of this delicate disposition are present to this day. Hadrat Wālā is extremely sensitive. He cannot fall asleep in a room if a sharp smelling item is placed in it, e.g. guavas. As for foul smelling items, there is no question about his sensitivity to them.

I personally observed this during our journey to Allāhābād. As long as a basket of guavas were not removed from the room, Hadrat Wālā could not fall asleep. Also during this trip, a considerable amount of raw tobacco was placed at quite a distance in a provisions shop. Despite the distance, Hadrat Wālā perceived the smell. When we made inquiries, we learnt that it was really tobacco which was placed there.

Just recently a person sent some halwā (a sweetmeat) which was placed in an ugly looking container. When he tasted it, it seemed to have a terrible taste. We thought of giving it away to someone. But when it was placed in a beautiful glass jar and then Hadrat Wālā tasted it, he gauged that it had a good taste. His delicate disposition could not accept it because it was kept in a bad way in an ugly container.

Hadrat Wālā could not eat or drink anyone's leftover food or water. He recoiled from it. In fact, he could not even eat or drink the left over food or water of pious personalities which is normally taken as a source of blessings. However, he did not disapprove of anyone joining him in eating from the same utensil. He could not get sleep if the replying of letters was not completed by the night. On countless journeys I observed him delivering lectures until half the night, he would then sit with all his post and will not stop replying to the letters until he completed a major portion of them. He would say: "I cannot fall asleep even if I want to unless I complete answering such a number of letters which reduces the load to a manageable number." He would receive several days of post while on his journeys, and spend major portions of the night replying to the letters. There were times when he commenced after ʿishā and continued answering letters until the adhān of fajr.

Incidents concerning Hadrat Wālā's delicate disposition are observed on a daily basis. If any of his associates delivered a confusing lecture or did something incorrectly, he would get a light fever and headache immediately. This, despite the fact that – by Allāh's will – his mind is so strong that he engages in mental work throughout the day right until he goes to sleep. He is never free at any time. He says: "Since childhood my brains are accustomed to the fact that if even the most ordinary matters are not explained in sequence, I cannot understand them. I cannot deliver a confusing lecture nor understand a confusing lecture of anyone. This is because my brain is used to a special sequence since childhood."

In short, Hadrat Wālā's delicate disposition resembles, to a certain extent, the delicate disposition of Hadrat Mirzā Mazhar Jān Jānā *rahimahullāh*. This is observed on a daily basis. Hadrat Wālā himself quotes the words of our senior Pīrānī Sāhibah [Hadrat Wālā's wife]: "You should have been born in a king's palace."

Glad Tidings Of Spiritual Progress

Hadrat Wālā relates a dream which he saw when he was a child. He does not remember any dream before it. He says: "The house in which we lived in Meerut had two porches. I saw a cage with two beautiful pigeons placed in the larger porch. Night falls and it becomes dark. The pigeons say to me: 'It is dark, bring some light to our cage.' I replied: 'You can do it yourselves.' They begin rubbing their beaks vigorously resulting in a bright light which illuminated the whole cage. After some time, I related this dream to my uncle, Wājid 'Alī Sāhib Marhūm. He interpreted it as follows: 'The two pigeons represent the soul and the self (rūh and nafs) because the Sufis consider the soul to be male and the self to be female. So the soul and the self requested you to strive and illuminate them. When you asked them to do it themselves, they rubbed their beaks and illuminated the cage. This means that you will not engage in spiritual exercises and exertion. Allāh willing, Allāh *ta'ālā* will illuminate your soul and self with the light of cognition without having to strive for it.'" Hadrat Wālā adds: "Anyway, one part of the interpretation was correct in the sense that I did not engage in much spiritual exercises and exertion. But the light has not developed as yet. May Allāh *ta'ālā* realize it for me."

Hadrat Shaykh Muhammad Thānwī's Prediction

Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib Muhaddith Thānwī *rahimahullāh* was one of the senior khulafā' of Hadrat Miyājī Nūr Muhammad Sāhib *nawwarallāhu marqadahu* and a Pīr Bhāi[1] of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*. He used to say with reference to Hadrat Wālā when the latter was still a child studying in the maktab: "This boy will take my place after me." By Allāh's grace, this is exactly what happened. After the Maulānā passed away, Hadrat Wālā became the sole exponent of internal and external sciences in this town [Thānah Bhawan]. The Maulānā had a special bond with Hadrat Wālā. Even after he passed away, he addressed Hadrat Wālā in a dream: "Our focus is still on you exactly as it had been when we were alive." Hadrat Wālā was very young when the Maulānā was alive. There were some claims and counter claims between Hadrat Wālā's father and the Maulānā. Hadrat Wālā's father wanted to send some betel leaf to him as a gift, so he said to Hadrat Wālā: "You should rather take it, he is more likely to accept it from you. If not, he will not accept it." The Maulānā accepted the gift solely to make Hadrat Wālā happy although his own heart was not keen on accepting it.

Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad's Statement

Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī Muhājir Madanī *rahimahullāh* made the following statement about Hadrat Wālā to his attendant: "I had love for him from the time he did not even know me." In short, Hadrat Wālā was beloved and adored by the pious elders since childhood, and traces of his acceptance in Allāh's court were visible from a young age.

Acceptance In Allāh's Sight

The following is also noteworthy: Hadrat Wālā's foster mother with whom he spent his childhood said to him [later on in life]: "I noticed this in your very childhood: Whenever you had to go on a journey, it would certainly be cloudy and the journey would be covered very comfortably."

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[1] Khulafā' of the same shaykh are known as Pīr Bhāis.

EDUCATION

Memorizing The Qur'ān

Hadrat Wālā memorized a major portion of the Qur'ān under Hāfiz Husayn 'Alī Sāhib Marhūm who was originally from Delhi but had settled down in Meerut. Hadrat Wālā memorized the beginning chapters under Ākhūnjī Sāhib who was a resident of Khatūlī, district Meerut. He then completed it under Hāfiz Husayn 'Alī Sāhib.

Persian

He studied the most elementary Persian under several teachers in Meerut but cannot recall their names now. He then studied the intermediary Persian books under Hadrat Maulānā Fath Muhammad Sāhib in Thānah Bhawan, and the higher books up to and including *Abul Fadl* under his maternal uncle, Wājid 'Alī Sāhib. The latter was an expert in Persian literature. Hadrat Wālā proceeded to Deoband to study Arabic. He studied the remaining Persian books under Maulānā Manfa'at 'Alī Sāhib Deobandī. The remaining books were *Panj Riq'ah, Qasā'id 'Urfī* and *Sikandar Nāmah.*

Expertise In Persian

Hadrat Wālā has full mastery over the Persian language. He can speak and write it, and can also compose poetry and prose. During his student days he fell ill with scabies and took leave from the madrasah to go home. In order to occupy himself, he wrote *Mathnawī Zer-o-Bumm.* He was only eighteen years old at the time.

Arabic

Hadrat Wālā's entire studies of the Arabic language were undertaken in Deoband and, by Allāh's grace, he completed all the books by the age of nineteen or twenty. He lived in Deoband for five years as a student. He had taken admission towards the end of Dhū al-Qa'dah 1295 A.H. and completed in the beginning of 1301 A.H.

He had studied the elementary Arabic books in Thānah Bhawan under Hadrat Maulānā Fath Muhammad Sāhib. On

reaching Deoband, he commenced studying *Mishkāt Sharīf, Mukhtaṣar al-Maʿānī* and *Mullā Ḥasan*. His father had decided to select him for Islamic studies from when Ḥaḍrat Wālā had not even started wearing a trouser. In like manner, he had selected his younger brother for Western education from that young age. Ḥaḍrat Wālā's father must have gauged each one's affinities and inclinations. He was a very wise man. Although he was occupied with worldly activities, he adhered strictly to ṣalāh, fasting and recitation of the Qur'ān, and showed full enthusiasm in Ḥaḍrat Wālā's Islamic education.

Father's Sincerity

Ḥaḍrat Wālā's foster mother said to the father on one occasion: "You have selected your younger son for Western education. Very well, he will be able to earn a living. But the elder one is studying Arabic; what will he eat, how will he earn a living? Your properties will be distributed among your inheritors and they will not suffice." Ḥaḍrat Wālā's father vehemently disapproved of what she said. Although he always respected her, he went into a rage and said: "Bhābhī Ṣāḥibah! You want to know how he will earn a living by studying Arabic!? By Allāh, those whom you consider to be wealthy and able to earn a living will fall at his feet, while he will not even turn an eye to their riches. You have really grieved me by what you said."

After quoting this incident, Ḥaḍrat Wālā used to say: "If a Sufi had made this statement, people today would have considered it to be his supernatural feat. My heart always gushes forth with supplications for my father. I ask Allāh *taʿālā* to cool his grave. He did a great favour to me. It was because of him that I learnt these few letters which are benefiting me. If not, I do not know what I would have turned out to be. Although I did not really learn anything, my brother constantly expresses remorse and says: 'Why did my father not direct me towards Islamic education as well?' All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I did not even have a single whispering of why my father did not direct me towards Western education."

From the above we can gauge the extent of enthusiasm and sincerity with which Ḥaḍrat Wālā's father got him to study Arabic and Islamic studies. What confidence and noble thoughts he had about Allāh *taʿālā*. It was solely through his good thoughts and genuine intention that Allāh *taʿālā* caused

his prediction to unfold to the letter. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Two Childhood Dreams

I feel I should briefly relate two dreams which Hadrat Wālā had during his childhood. The gist of one dream is that two people, a pious personality and a worldly ruler, wrote separate letters to him and both of them said: "We conferred honour to you." On one, the seal of Rasūlullāh's blessed name was stamped on the four corners and was clearly distinguished. The words of the other seal were not legible. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* interpreted the dream as follows: "Inshā Allāh, you will receive honour of Dīn and of this world as well."

In the second dream, Hadrat Wālā saw a large pond from which silver was gushing forth like from a fountain and was following him. Maulānā interpreted it as follows: "Inshā Allāh, the world will follow you but you will not turn towards it."

Good Fortune

Hadrat Wālā's father used to say: "This boy seems to be very fortunate because on every function of his, Allāh *taʿālā* gave me so much that I could spend with all my heart." On the occasion of Hadrat Wālā's marriage, not only did he distribute paisa (coins) but also rupees. Everyone spoke about it. His father also invited the people of the town. Moreover, no matter how much Hadrat Wālā asked him for, he would give without any hesitation. Whereas, when it came to giving his younger brother, Munshī Akbar ʿAlī, he would count how much he gave and also take a counting from him. When the latter complained to the father, he said: "I feel sorry for him. Whatever he takes from me will be only for as long as I live. Remember this after I pass away, he will remain totally aloof from all wealth and possessions." Subsequently, Hadrat Wālā remained totally aloof from doubtful wealth. Instead of taking the remaining agricultural land, he took some cash which was spent in the construction of a house, and some was spent for performing his second hajj. Eventually, he even withdrew himself from the agricultural land. His father had ascertained his temperament since childhood. He was a man of great wisdom and foresight.

A Worthy Son

Hadrat Wālā used to explain many rulings with regard to the lawful and the prohibited to his father in a respectful manner. On one occasion Hadrat Wālā wrote to him stating the impermissibility of mortgaging one's property. His father happened to meet a Hindu acquaintance and said to him in a tone which smacked of a complaint: "I got my one son to study Arabic, and now he reprimands me over every matter. He says this is against the Sharīʿah and that is impermissible, and is now advising me to give up mortgages." On hearing this, the Hindu said: "Munshījī! This is something to be happy about. It seems you have a very worthy son; he desires your wellbeing. Had you taught him astronomy, he would have spoken to you about auspicious omens. Had you taught him law, he would speak to you about the law. Had you taught him medicine, he would have informed you of what is harmful and what is beneficial. You got him to study Dīn so it is inevitable that he tells you matters related to Dīn. Be grateful, he is a very worthy son; he is your well-wisher. He wants to save you from the punishment of the Hereafter. You ought to be pleased over the fact that whatever you are spending for his studies is being spent in the proper manner and proper place."

Preservation Of Time

Hadrat Wālā did not intermingle with anyone during his student days. He would either be occupied in his studies, or, if he got the opportunity, he would sit in the company of his special teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

One day, the Maulānā was gone somewhere and Hadrat Wālā had some free time. So instead of passing it in futile activities, he presented himself before one of his other teachers, Maulānā Sayyid Ahmad Sāhib. The Maulānā asked: "What brought you here?" Hadrat Wālā replied plainly and honestly: "Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib is gone out today, so I came to spend time with you." Hadrat Wālā had a few distant relatives in Deoband, but he would not go to meet them.

In the beginning, some of his relatives insisted on him to join them in their meals which were always ready and prepared, there was no need for him to prepare his own food. Hadrat Wālā refused to go until he obtained permission from his

father. When he wrote to his father in this regard, he replied with a severe scolding: “Did you go there [Deoband] to make relatives or to study? Don’t you dare go to any of your relatives.” Hadrat Wālā gave up intermingling with them and spent his entire student life in this way.

Hadrat Wālā says: “All praise is due to Allāh, just as I went their unblemished, I left there unblemished after five years. Once I completed my studies, I went and met all my relatives and also accepted their invitations. Before this, I did not establish any contact with anyone – not with my relatives, not with students and not with any of the residents of the town. If anyone tried to interact and intermingle with me, I responded with inattentiveness. So much so, people generally considered me to be snobbish. But this was not the case. The fact of the matter was that I abhorred wasting my time in futilities.”

Following A Strict Routine

This was a distinguishing quality of Hadrat Wālā which commenced very early in his life and continues to this day. It was this quality which enabled him to complete his studies so quickly, always kept him away from evil company and enabled him to write so many books. There are very few people in the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* who possessed this quality. His following a strict routine is most astonishing. He is like a machine which works continuously and does not stop at any time. Obviously, a person who has so many occupations cannot function without a strict routine and time-table. A person can only follow a strict routine if he is not overpowered by etiquette and politeness, and he carries out every task at its time and place.

Let alone with outsiders, look at how he followed his routine in the following incident. His teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh*, came as a guest to Hadrat Wālā’s place. He made all arrangements to make him feel comfortable. When the time for Hadrat Wālā ’s writing work came, he respectfully said to his teacher: “Hadrat, I normally do a bit of writing at this time. If Hadrat permits me, I will do some writing and come back to you.” Hadrat Maulānā replied: “You may most certainly go and write. Never neglect your work for my sake.” Hadrat Wālā did this despite not having any inclination to do any writing work on that day. But he did not permit himself to leave out that work or else it could result in

absence of blessings. He went and did a little writing and returned.

Abstaining From Futilities

Hadrat Wālā's intelligence, sharpness of mind and strong memory were well known among all the students. The students were invited to eat mangoes. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* were also present. When a few mangoes were left, Maulānā Ya'qūb Sāhib gauged that the students will want to fling the pits and peels at each other. So he got up intentionally from the courtyard [to allow them to play their game] and proceeded to his class. The students then thoroughly enjoyed themselves flinging the pits and peels at each other. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, due to his absolute humility and informality, joined in.

In the meantime, when Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib was proceeding towards his classroom, Hadrat Wālā considered it to be a golden opportunity and accompanied him. When the students began making too much of mischief, Hadrat Maulānā went and stood by the class door. He commanded extreme awe, so the courtyard was cleared within seconds, and all the students fled and began hiding here and there. Hadrat Maulānā then returned to his house, and Maulānā also left the class and returned to his room. Later on, some students tried to throw juice or water on Hadrat Wālā but he locked his room door. His focus on his studies can be gauged from this incident. In short, he did not waste any of his time in futile activities or bad company during his student days. He remained fully occupied in his fundamental objective of acquiring knowledge.

Teachers' Opinions

Hadrat Wālā was most enthusiastic about the acquisition of knowledge to the extent that he would read some of the non-prescribed books to some of his teachers while they were performing wudū' and getting ready for salāh. All his teachers paid special attention to him and they had good opinions of him. When Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* came to Deoband to take the students' exams and attend the qualification ceremony, Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib

rahimahullāh made special mention of Hadrat Wālā's intelligence and sharp mind. When Maulānā Gangohī heard these praises, he began posing difficult questions to Hadrat Wālā and was most satisfied with his answers.

Maulānā Sayyid Ahmad Sāhib tested Hadrat Wālā on the book *Sikandar Nāmah* and asked him the meaning of a poem. Hadrat Wālā did not remember the meaning as explained by his teacher so he gave his own explanation. The Maulānā asked him: "Can it have any other meaning?" Hadrat Wālā provided another explanation. The Maulānā asked again: "Can it have any other meaning?" Hadrat Wālā provided a third explanation. The Maulānā said: "None of your explanations are correct, but I will give you marks for your intelligence." He said this although he himself was an extremely intelligent personality, to the extent that Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib – the chief of all intellectuals – used to say with regard to him: "If Euclid[1] was very intelligent, he would have been as intelligent as him [Maulānā Sayyid Ahmad Sāhib] and not more intelligent than him." The Maulānā was an expert in maths although he did not study it under anyone. He acquired it through self study.

In short, the testimony of these intellectuals in favour of Hadrat Wālā's intelligence is a very weighty testimony. The gist of all that we said is that Hadrat Wālā surpassed all his classmates as a student.

Quick-Wittedness

Hadrat Wālā's level of quick-wittedness, dexterity, astuteness, discernment and mastery in logic was so high that when any person belonging to any sect or religion came to Deoband to have a debate, Hadrat Wālā would go there immediately and defeat the person.

He went to debate an English priest. When Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib came to know about it, he felt that Hadrat Wālā was quite young and might get intimidated. So he also went with a view to helping Hadrat Wālā. But Hadrat Wālā silenced the Englishman within a few minutes. When the Englishman's madam realized he was defeated, she sent a note to him asking him to leave. So he offered the excuse to Hadrat

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[1] A Greek mathematician.

Wālā that his madam was summoning him, and left immediately never to return to Deoband.

Acumen In Debating

Hadrat Wālā says: "The enthusiasm which I had for debating in my young days is now replaced by as much aversion for it because of its harms." He had debates with Christians, Aryans, Shīʿas and Ghayr Muqallids during his student days. Even today, when Maulānā Sayyid Murtadā Hasan Sāhib – the chief of all debaters – hears Hadrat Wālā's logical and coherent speeches, he is left astounded. He says: "Hadrat Wālā is so insightful in the art of debating that even the greatest debaters cannot compare with him."

We witness this on a daily basis when very senior and articulate debaters come to discuss extremely complex issues with him. Hadrat Wālā is able to silence them by Allāh's help. The beauty in all this is that he does not shift an inch from the principles of debating and never hesitates in the least in accepting the truth. Despite his total affinity with debating, he always remains aloof from it because the majority of present day debaters have impure motives. This is why there is no benefit in debating. Instead, it causes more harm.

It habituates a person into engaging in pointless discussions and becoming obstinate. The capability of identifying the facts is destroyed. Hadrat Wālā goes into detail in speaking about these evils which are found in the debaters of today. He compares it to the appealing and admonitory stories of the debaters of the past whose aim was to fathom and establish the truth.

Moderation

Although Hadrat Wālā was very proficient in the rational sciences, he always disliked them in comparison to the traditional sciences. Consequently, when he used to commence philosophy lessons, then instead of commencing with *Bismillāhir Rahmāni Rahīm*, he would commence with *Aʿūdhu billāhi minash shaytānir rajīm* (I seek refuge from the accursed Satan). I recall a statement of Hadrat Wālā at this point. He said: "All praise is due to Allāh, I never permit my disposition to overpower my intellect, and never permit my intellect to overpower the Sharīʿah."

Hadrat Wālā was so proficient in the rational sciences that he used to read major sections of difficult books like *Sidrā* and *Shams Bāzighah* without a translation, and even the most difficult issues appeared like smooth flowing water. Those who are experts in the rational sciences generally remain devoted to this field. But Allāh *taʿālā* placed absolute moderation in Hadrat Wālā's disposition enabling him to accord every single thing the rank which it deserved. Thus, despite his expertise in the rational sciences, he considered them to be merely tools for the understanding of religious sciences. Any person observing his actions, statements and writings with a deep and impartial eye will clearly notice the qualities of moderation and preservation of ranks in Hadrat Wālā. Obviously, a person who studies his life with the spectacles of obstinacy, ignorance or customs will not see it. The following couplet will apply to him:

> It is no fault of the sun if a blind person cannot see during the day.

The quality of moderation is a distinguished quality which is conferred on a special servant after many centuries. A Hakīm al-Ummah and Muhiyy as-Sunnah (specialist physician of the ummah and reviver of the Sunnah) is honoured with this quality. It is this very quality which becomes a cause of opposition to such personalities and their slandering. How can a person who wipes out fanatical and zealous customs, uproots innovations, removes Muslims from the immoderate way, and brings them to the path of moderation – or in other words, to the straight path – ever remain protected from opposition and slander!? He is more prepared to give up his own benefits, where will he bother about their slanders?!

> Although the intelligent ones may consider it to be slander, we do not desire name and fame.

Humbleness

Hadrat Wālā himself says about his mastery in logic: "All praise is due to Allāh I am an expert in logic. Why should I not say the truth when I am neither humble nor proud? Why should I deny something which Allāh conferred to me? It is a bestowal from Allāh *taʿālā*, it is not my achievement. In fact, I do not even consider it to be an excellence. Through the blessings of serving the pious personalities, I have fully understood that:

Energizing one's intellect and disposition is not the way to success. The kindness of the Master cannot be achieved without humility."

Comprehensiveness

Hadrat Wālā also said: "In most cases, my method of rectification is to overpower a person in whatever field he claims to be a master of. I do this provided that field is the objective. I then have the right to make him subservient to me in matters of rectification. In this way, the person too does not consider it demeaning to follow me, he does not have the right to dispute with me, and he does not have any doubts about my teachings and instructions."

This demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's comprehensive knowledge of various sciences and branches of knowledge. This is accepted by all – his supporters and his enemies. No one denies it. I mentioned this by the way. I now return to my objective.

Hadrat Wālā had a special affinity with Sufism and books on Sufism during his student days. A few incidents in this regard will be related in the chapter on bayʿah and spiritual bestowals.

Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb's Prediction

Hadrat Wālā's qualification ceremony[1] was conducted by the blessed hands of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* in 1300 A.H. A huge and elaborate function was organized for this occasion. When Hadrat Wālā heard about the impending qualification ceremony, he took his classmates and went to Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib and said: "Hadrat, we have heard that a qualification ceremony is going to be held and we will receive qualification certificates, whereas we are most certainly not eligible to receive all this. This ceremony should be cancelled or else the Madrasah will be maligned for conferring certificates to such unworthy students as us."

The Maulānā responded with full emotion: "You are wrong in thinking in this way. Your teachers are present among you, this is why you do not consider yourself to be something. And you ought to think in this manner. You will only ascertain your true worth when you leave here and go out into the world. No

[1] Known as a dastār bandī. A turban is tied around the qualifying student's head.

matter where you go, you alone will be the shining stars. The rest of the field is bare, do not worry."

After quoting the above statement, Hadrat Wālā says: "It is really through the blessings of Hadrat Maulānā's prediction that no matter where I had to live, the senior 'ulamā' of that place looked up to me with respect, and all sections of the community gave me preference over others." This is the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

I just recalled another prediction of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. The Maulānā had given Hadrat Wālā the responsibility of replying to fatwās when he was still a student. On one occasion, he received a very lengthy question, and he too provided a very lengthy, detailed and fully-referenced reply. After completing it, he gave it to Maulānā to check. He read the entire question and answer, and placed his signature of approval on it. But at the same time, he said to Hadrat Wālā: "It seems you have a lot of time on your hands. I would like to see the time when heaps of letters will be placed before you and how you will give such lengthy replies."

Eventually this is exactly what happened. Heaps upon heaps of letters are before Hadrat Wālā on a daily basis. He provides extremely short but most comprehensive replies which are absolutely sufficient and encompass all angles of the question. They are manifestations of the Arabic idiom which translates as: "A mere indication suffices an intelligent person."

For example, Hadrat Wālā will pose an admonitory question through which the answer will be understood automatically. This technique of replying is most beneficial for the seeker and has the greatest impact on his mind. He answers lengthy confusing questions with absolute ease and comprehensiveness in a few lines. He completes replying to each day's post on the same day. He is very particular in this regard and, by Allāh's grace, never lags behind. This despite the fact that he gets very little time to reply to the post, especially nowadays when the post reaches him quite late because of the change of times in the railway postal system.

The gist of this chapter in the light of the above incidents and situations is that just as Hadrat Wālā is Ashraf al-'Ulamā' (the noblest of 'ulamā') in today's times, through the grace of Allāh

taʿālā, he was the Ashraf aṯ-Ṯalabah (the noblest of students) during his student days.

HONOURABLE TEACHERS

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb

Allāh *taʿālā* blessed Hadrat Wālā with teachers who were the Ghazzālīs and Rāzīs of their time. The most distinguished personality from among them was Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib. Apart from being an expert in every science, he was a spiritual master and a man of the internal sciences. Hadrat Wālā acquired immense blessings and obtained most astonishing and unique sciences from him. He relates most of the Maulānā's statements, life situations and knowledge with relish. He says this quite often: "It was not just a class lesson, it was a special focus from him. Imagine, he is delivering a tafsīr lesson, explaining the meanings of the verses, while tears are flowing from his eyes."

Other Teachers

Some of his other teachers were Maulānā Sayyid Ahmad Sāhib, Janāb Mullā Mahmūd Sāhib, Maulānā ʿAbd al-ʿAlī Sāhib and Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahumullāh*. His primary and elementary teachers were mentioned in the previous chapter.

Hadrat Qārī Muhammad Abdullāh Muhājir Makkī

Hadrat Wālā studied the modes of Qur'ān recitation under the world-renown Janāb Qārī Muhammad ʿAbdullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* while in Makkah Mukarramah. He was considered to be an expert in this field even by the distinguished readers of the Arab world. Hadrat Wālā's constant practising under him created a unique similarity in his recitation with that of his famous teacher. When Qārī Sāhib used to teach Hadrat Wālā in the upper storey of Madrasah Saulatiyah [in Makkah], those who were passing by downstairs could not distinguish between the teacher and the student. From this we can gauge Hadrat Wālā's power of absorption. This was the real secret behind Hadrat Wālā absorbing the most excellences from his honourable teachers. Qārī Sāhib displayed immense affection towards Hadrat Wālā and also gave him a few books on the subject of recitation to teach to

the students of his madrasah so that he could acquire some affinity with teaching this subject.

Hadrat Wālā relates: "In the beginning I thought I was a very good reader. So in order to display my proficiency to Qārī Sāhib, I said to him: 'Before you can start teaching me, listen to one section of my recitation so that you can gauge the extent of my weakness. You can then remove whatever weakness you find in me.' Whereas this was not my intention. Rather it was my self which was dictating to me. Qārī Sāhib listened to one section, and I asked him: 'What do you think?' he was very kind to me when he said: 'There is a slight weakness, but – Allāh willing – it will be removed very quickly.' Only when I started practising under him did I realize that I knew nothing in this field. I felt very ashamed at having recited to him."

Hadrat Wālā's Unique Qur'ān Recitation

Hadrat Wālā constantly relates an extremely useful principle of Qārī Sāhib. He says: "No attention whatsoever should be directed to the style of recitation. One's entire focus should be directed at correcting the pronunciation of letters. Whatever style of recitation develops after correcting the pronunciation of letters will certainly be admirable." We now see that although a long time has passed since Hadrat Wālā practised under Qārī Sāhib and he also gave up that style of reading, no matter what style he adopts, it is always appealing and the people of the heart thoroughly enjoy it. So much so, a live-hearted and sound-minded philosopher was very impressed and requested Hadrat Wālā to permit him to record it on a gramophone. But because it was not permitted by the Sharī'ah, he did not allow him.

When Hadrat Wālā went to Pānīpat, the expert readers who were proud about the correctness of their pronunciation were very impressed by Hadrat Wālā's excellent pronunciation. Maulānā 'Ayn al-Qudāt Sāhib established a distinguished madrasah for the recitation of the Qur'ān in Lucknow which is existing to this day. Coincidentally, he heard Hadrat Wālā's recitation in the fajr salāh. He was most impressed and requested that he would like to listen to Hadrat Wālā reading the Qur'ān separately. He acceded to his request, went personally to him, and read three sections to him so that he may be satisfied. The Maulānā enjoyed the recitation thoroughly.

I recall a pious person's words which he said directly to me: "Maulānā [Hadrat Wālā] does not merely read the Qur'ān, he slaughters it." On certain occasions, this is what is really experienced by the listeners. For example, in the lengthy recitation of the fajr salāh, some soft-hearted followers are overcome by crying.

Love And Respect For Teachers

Allāh *taʿālā* had bestowed Hadrat Wālā with expert teachers in every field, all of whom were unparalleled in their respective fields. The attention and consideration which they accorded to him were not directed to any other student. Hadrat Wālā too had a bond with them which was not enjoyed by anyone else. We can say that he had intense love for them. He says: "I did not strive excessively in my studies. Whatever Allāh *taʿālā* conferred to me was by virtue of my respectful and loving relationship with my teachers and elders. All praise is due to Allāh, I can say that I did not displease any of my elders for a single minute. I do not think anyone today has as much respect as I have in my heart for my elders." Those who listen to Hadrat Wālā's statements know fully well that he is an embodiment of respect. As the saying goes: "The entire path of love is nothing but respect." It is solely through this respect for the elders that Hadrat Wālā received these external and internal treasures. Maulānā Rūmī says:

> These skies were illuminated by virtue of respect. The angels and sinless are pure solely because of respect.

The Love And Attention Of Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was in the habit of explaining many sciences and facts to Hadrat Wālā because he knew that the latter had a special interest in them. He had an affinity with truths, understood intricate matters and valued them.

A person of little understanding asked the Maulānā: "A woman who experiences menses does not have to make up for her missed salāhs but she has to make up for her missed fasts. What is the reason for this?" He replied: "The reason is that if you do not act on this ruling you will be struck so many times with a shoe that you will not find a single sore on your head."

When Hadrat Wālā posed the same question to him on another occasion, he provided a very intricate answer. The first person would not have understood this answer, so he was given the previous reply. Maulānā Rūmī says:

> A person who speaks a language which is alien to us is considered to be voiceless even if he speaks in a hundred different voices.

Preserving The Sciences Of His Teachers

Hadrat Wālā constantly relates and quotes the sciences, lofty conditions and unique researches of his teachers. He relates them with such emotion that the listeners go into an ecstasy and a sample of the pious predecessors is presented to them. After relating their merits, Hadrat Wālā would often follow it with the following couplet:

أولئك ابائي فجئني بمثلهم – إذا جمعتنا يا جرير المجامع

O Jarīr! When you bring us together in large assemblies, then present to us people as great as my forefathers.

When we hear Hadrat Wālā relating their merits and excellences, we simultaneously witness the separate traits and peculiarities of those personalities collectively in Hadrat Wālā. The following couplet applies:

ليس على الله بمستنكر – أن يجمع العالم في واحد

It is not difficult for Allāh to gather the entire world in a single person.

Hadrat Wālā's power of absorption is clearly gauged from the manner in which he relates their merits. When Hadrat Wālā saw his elders at Deoband wearing narrow pants, he gave up wearing the broad pants which he was accustomed to. From his student days he wore simple clothes and led a very simple life. He came to his father during one of the holidays. He had a shawl wrapped around him in an informal way, not in the proper usual manner where the two ends are equal in length, one is not hanging lower than the other, and so on. When his father saw him like this he reprimanded him saying: "Miyā! You do not even know how to wrap a shawl around you!?" Although Hadrat Wālā really respected his father and was also scared of him, he was very affected by his words and responded

spontaneously: “H̲ad̲rat! If it was your sole objective to teach me how to wear a shawl, you should not have bothered to send me to Deoband Madrasah because no one there knows how to wear a shawl. They are all slapdash like this.”

His father was short-tempered but he remained silent and never reprimanded H̲ad̲rat Wālā on such matters again. He was an extremely intelligent and wise man, he understood the reality. H̲ad̲rat Wālā expresses a lot of sorrow over the fastidiousness and meticulousness of today’s students as regards their clothing and appearance. He says: “This is proof that they do not have high aspirations and no desire for knowledge, or else they would have never paid any attention to such base and trivial matters.”

When H̲ad̲rat Wālā was still a student at Deoband, Janāb H̲āfiz̲ Shaykh ʿAbd al-Karīm S̲āh̲ib who held the pious elders in high regard and who was pledged to H̲ad̲rat Shāh ʿAbd al-Ghanī S̲āh̲ib came to visit Maulānā Shāh Rafīʿ ad-Dīn S̲āh̲ib. He was astonished when he saw the appearance and dressing of H̲ad̲rat Wālā, and his studious nature. He remarked to Maulānā Rafīʿ ad-Dīn S̲āh̲ib: “H̲ad̲rat, you have made the boys totally immersed in their shaykhs.”

In short, H̲ad̲rat Wālā was extremely enthusiastic about the excellences and blessings of his teachers and elders, and made it his main preoccupation. We see the results of it today: He is a combination of the unparalleled excellences by virtue of the attention and focus of the elders. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

TEACHING

Madrasah Fayd Ām, Kānpūr

When Hadrat Wālā completed his studies, he began teaching in Kānpūr for a period of fourteen years. During this time, the people of Kānpūr benefited greatly from his excellent admonitions and beneficial writings. In addition to this, he had taken the responsibility of issuing fatwās, the copies of which were preserved in the Madrasah. This resulted in a huge collection of his fatwās.

The background to Hadrat Wālā going to Kānpūr is as follows: Madrasah Fayd ʿĀm was the oldest Islamic centre of learning in Kānpūr. Its head teacher, Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, a famous scholar and expert in the rational sciences, became angry with the authorities over some matter, left the Madrasah, and established another one by the name of Dār al-ʿUlūm. Because of his popularity among the students, no one had the courage to take his place, and no one was prepared to go there.

However, Hadrat Wālā did not have any knowledge of all this. When he heard that the Madrasah needed a teacher, he left without any hesitation towards the end of Safar 1301 A.H. after obtaining his father's permission and instructions from his honourable teachers. He commenced his duties of teaching once he reached there. His monthly salary was just twenty five rupees. This was not a very low salary for those days, but bearing in mind Hadrat Wālā's capabilities and his father's affluence, the salary was really nothing. Despite this, he considered it to be a very high salary because, he says: "Whenever I used to think about my student days, I considered ten rupees at the most to be sufficient for the fulfilment of my monthly needs. Five rupees for my self and five rupees for my house. I never thought of a higher salary and never considered myself eligible for more."

Popularity In Kānpūr

Although Hadrat Wālā was absolutely young and still "green", he became popular very quickly among the teachers and the residents of Kānpūr; and was generally liked by them. In fact,

even Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Sāhib received him warmly and respectfully.

Immediately after qualifying, Hadrat Wālā was given the major books to teach. He never had the experience of teaching before, and his studies too were not undertaken with full focus in this direction. This is why he became quite perturbed. He used to say to himself: "O Allāh! How will I be able to teach these books?" He then supplicated to Allāh *taʿālā* and experienced no difficulties once he began teaching. By Allāh's grace, he taught with absolute ease. Periodically he would receive consolation and encouragement from the unseen. Two of his dreams are quoted in his own words from *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā*:

1. When I commenced teaching Hadīth, I dreamt of my teacher Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. A group of students studying *Bukhārī Sharīf* was sitting in front of me, one copy was placed before me, and I was looking in the book and conducting my lesson. My respected teacher entered, and I think he had a copy of *Bukhārī* in his hand as well. As I was teaching and explaining, he was approving whatever I was saying.

2. There is a place like the small printing press of Janāb ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Khān Sāhib, the founder of Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm Kānpūr. Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* is standing at its well and I am standing close by. After seeing this dream, I was convinced of my affinity with the science of tafsīr.

Glad tidings of affinity with the science of tafsīr were also given by Hadrat Wālā's shaykh and mentor [Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*] during Hadrat Wālā's stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah. This will be related later on.

Resignation From Madrasah Fayd Ām

Hadrat Wālā became distressed after working at Madrasah Fayd ʿĀm for three or four months. A major reason for this was that he abstained from announcing the need for donations [for the Madrasah] in his lectures. He had a natural aversion to this practice which is still found in him to this day. He considered it to be against religious self-respect, and if one was compelled into making a special announcement for it, he considered it to be impermissible. In short, Hadrat Wālā had the same attitude and stance as he has today.

The committee members of the Madrasah discussed the matter among themselves and complained about it. Someone informed Hadrat Wālā about it. He was most disturbed and replied: "If I have to give a talk solely for collecting funds, then I rather do the collections for my own self." He added: "This is not my work; it is actually the responsibility of the committee members. My work is to teach." He related this story as well: "If the 'ulamā' are instructed to teach and to collect funds also, then it will be just like how King Akbar was overjoyed by a jester so he gave him one of the royal elephants as a gift. Now how will this jester be able to afford to feed this elephant? He eventually suspended a drum from its neck and left it on the King's road from where the King's conveyance passes. When the King saw the royal elephant wandering about like this, he summoned for the jester and asked him the reason. He replied: 'O King! If I did not do this what else could I have done? If I were to keep it tied at my house, from where would I obtain food for it? I have no money. I end up spending whatever I earn daily. When I could find no alternative, I tied a drum to its neck and said: 'Go around singing and dancing like me, earn a living and eat from your earnings as I do.'"

"So this is what you people want us to do. We must teach and we must go around collecting donations so that we can receive a salary." Although this made absolute sense, the committee members created an uproar about it among themselves. Hadrat Wālā was most displeased and handed in his resignation. They came and apologized but he refused to stay because he felt that they were unappreciative and it would be difficult to work with such people.

Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "Those were my young days when a person is normally over enthusiastic. The actual reason was that employment was against my temperament. When I wrote about my complaints to my father, he provided explanations for each of the points which the committee members had said and wrote: 'Remain there for now, it is not appropriate to be hasty in resigning. Employment is certainly not our objective because Allāh *ta'ālā* has provided us with everything. The only reason why I permitted you to go there was because your are recently qualified, the books are still fresh in your mind, and they will become more consolidated through teaching. If you give up being an employee, your teaching will terminate totally and you will forget whatever you

studied. You will not be able to teach without being imposed to, and if you remain in the Madrasah, it will impose on you to teach.'"

But Hadrat Wālā was already broken hearted so he severed ties from Madrasah Fayd ʿĀm and made arrangements to return home.

Hadrat Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī

Before Hadrat Wālā could depart, he felt he ought to go to meet Hadrat Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī because he may not get an opportunity of coming to this area again. Subsequently, he went to visit him.

A New Madrasah Is Established

While Hadrat Wālā departed, Janāb ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Khān Sāhib and Hājī Kifāyatullāh Sāhib, both of whom had a lot of faith and confidence in Hadrat Wālā, were having mutual discussions about him. They said in their discussions: "We will not be able to obtain the services of another scholar like him and he should not be allowed to leave. A separate madrasah ought to be opened for him because most of the madāris in the city concentrate on the rational sciences. There is a dire need for a madrasah which has the full syllabus for Islamic studies."

The two made arrangements for Hadrat Wālā's monthly salary of 25 rupees, 20 of which will be arranged by Khān Sāhib and five by Hājī Sāhib. Later on, they also went around collecting donations but Hadrat Wālā never took this responsibility. When he returned from Ganj Murādābād, the two convinced him to remain. He began conducting lessons in the Jāmiʿ Musjid of Tipkāpūr district and a new madrasah was thus established. Because this madrasah combined the rational and traditional sciences, and it was housed in the Jāmiʿ Musjid, Hadrat Wālā named it Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm (combiner of several sciences). By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, it exists to this day. In the beginning, Hadrat Wālā used to be extremely shy to teach because he was absolutely young and still inexperienced. Consequently, the student number was very small for several years. But once his beard became longer, students began arriving in large numbers.

Love For Him

Hadrat Wālā relates: "I was very young when I went to Kānpūr, but all praise is due to Allāh, the people loved me from the very beginning and accorded me a lot of respect. Allāh *taʿālā* had placed love in the hearts of everyone – friends and foes. Those who were foes also loved me even though they did not have confidence in me. And I value love more than anything else because when there is love, there is informality and one is able to have a balanced and equal relationship. This brings about much comfort. On the other hand, if a person has confidence in me, it creates a burden on my heart and I have to do things to ensure that the confidence is not lost or does not waver. As for love, it remains even if the person does not have confidence in you."

Hadrat Wālā adds: "The people of Kānpūr treated me with so much of love, respect and hospitality that I even forgot my hometown and I felt more at home in Kānpūr than I did in my hometown. I loved the place so much that instead of engraving my name on my utensils, I engraved the words "Kānpūr". Even now when I look at those utensils I think of Kānpūr. Had it not been for Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's indication, I would have not left Kānpūr for the rest of my life. The fact of the matter is that the popularity which I got was because of the people of Kānpūr. After all, I was not of such a level nor am I even now. I still love the people of Kānpūr immensely and I am indebted to them. By Allāh's will, their hearts were generally so attracted to me that even differences in creed did not become obstacles."

People Of Opposing Beliefs Loved Him

In the beginning, Hadrat Wālā coincidentally attended a maulūd and did not stand up[1] because it was not his mentor's practice. He was the only person in the entire gathering who remained seated. All the others were standing because it was their belief and practice. One of Hadrat Wālā's students said to him in Arabic that it is not appropriate to remain seated at present. He did not pay heed and said:

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[1] Maulūd refers to the practice of celebrating the birth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The "standing up" refers to the practice of standing up when sending salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق

Obedience to the creation is not permitted if it involves disobedience to the Creator.

The student also remained seated. Later on, they learnt that on such occasions in the past, many people were beaten for not standing up because those who practised this were most fanatical. But no one had the courage to say a word to Hadrat Wālā because they generally loved and respected him. Yes, some of them cast side glances towards him. In fact, the sons of ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Khān Sāhib and a few other influential people who held such beliefs said: "Had we known that Maulānā did not stand up, we too would not have stood up." From this we can gauge how beloved Hadrat Wālā was to them in the sense that they were prepared to act against their beliefs because of him.

Travelling To Delhi To Study Medicine

After some time, Hadrat Wālā decided to continue teaching without taking a salary. Although, based on necessity, the latter jurists passed a verdict of permissibility to accept a wage for teaching Islamic subjects, Hadrat Wālā did not approve of it. While he was employed at Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, he felt he should go to Hakīm ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib Dehlawī, study medicine under him, and then earn a living from opening a clinic while teaching Dīn solely for Allāh's sake.

He wrote to his father in this regard. He happily gave permission, and because he loved Hadrat Wālā immensely, he set aside the income from one of his villages, Gadā-e-Khīrah, for his expenses. Hadrat Wālā proceeded to Delhi and started studying medicine. But the people of Kānpūr expressed their severe need for him in the madrasah and insisted on him to return. To add to this, Janāb Maulwī Hakīm Jamīl ad-Dīn Sāhib Ghāzīpūrī who had been Hadrat Wālā's classmate in Deoband stressed on him never to get involved in medicine because personal experience told him that it is impossible to serve Dīn while running a clinic.

Hadrat Wālā decided to return but Hakīm ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, despite having a very independent disposition began showing intense affection and kindness towards him although he was there for only 15 days. Hadrat Wālā considered it discourteous

and impolite to leave of his own accord. So he said to those who had come to call him back to Kānpūr: “I am prepared to return if Hakīm Sāhib permits.” When the latter was asked, he gave his permission by saying: “If he does not want to progress, he has the choice of returning if he so wishes.” Hadrat Wālā returned to Kānpūr and continued teaching as he had been.

Hadrat Wālā says this time and again: “May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Hakīm Maulwī Jamīl ad-Dīn Sāhib for advising me [not to pursue medicine]. He did a great favour to me.”

Although Janāb Hakīm ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib was a very senior and well-known personality, he developed a deep bond with Hadrat Wālā. When he eventually returned to Thānah Bhawan, Hakīm Sāhib made an intention of visiting him. A person from Thānah Bhawan was living in Delhi. Hakīm Sāhib asked him the procedures and rules which have to be followed when going to Thānah Bhawan. The person said: “He is your student, there are no rules for you.” He said: “No brother, our teacher student relationship is another matter and this path of Sufism is something else. I will follow the same protocol as anyone else.” Unfortunately he never got an opportunity of going because he passed away soon thereafter. Look at the level of his humility and sound disposition!

When Hadrat Wālā heard about this after Hakīm Sāhib’s demise, he said with genuine regret: “Had I known about this before his demise, I would have went personally to him and said: ‘Hadrat! The only rule for you to come to me is that I have come personally to you.’”

The People Of Kānpūr Rejoice Over His Return

The people of Kānpūr were overjoyed by Hadrat Wālā’s return, and they seemed to be saying:

> My master has returned to my alley. My water has returned to my stream.

Hadrat Wālā’s mentor, Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *quddisa sirruhu,* also expressed his joy in a letter. A section of this letter will be quoted later on.

The Beloved Of The People

Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed Hadrat Wālā with such a unique quality of being well-loved since childhood to the present time that no matter where he went, he was loved by everyone. Even people of other religions were attracted and drawn towards him. There are countless incidents in this regard.

He merely had to turn to a person and say a few words to him and the person's heart will be in Hadrat Wālā's hand. The love which he enjoyed in Kānpūr caused some people to suspect that he was resorting to some magical practices through which he was influencing people. A man who had pledged allegiance to Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *rahimahullāh* expressed his suspicion that the Maulānā and Hadrat Wālā certainly had some powers of influencing people; this is the only way of explaining the large numbers of people who were thronging around them. This man insisted on Hadrat Wālā to teach him the methodology. Hadrat Wālā blankly denied; in fact, he took an oath that he knows no such practice, it is solely Allāh's grace which is placing people's love for him in their hearts. The man was not convinced and continued persisting. When he refused to accept, Hadrat Wālā taught him the dhikr of *pās anfās*, and told him that this was the greatest practice.

The story of Hazbar Khān

There was an old and uncouth Pathan who enjoyed much respect in the city because he had been a chief at one time. He was now a worker for a chief but his pompous nature was still the same, and he used to scold everyone. He came to Hadrat Wālā during the occasion of the 10th of Muharram and said: "It was the practice of Shāh Salāmatullāh Sāhib to read the shahādat nāmah during the first ten days of Muharram. So you must also read it. If you do not read it, people will suspect that you reject it." Hadrat Wālā said: "It is not permissible to read it because it entails imitation of the Shīʿah." He was offended by Hadrat Wālā's reply and said: "It is so sad that I am telling you something which would be of benefit to you but you are not listening to me." Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is so sad that people who do not possess knowledge are going around and advising the knowledgeable to ask them before proceeding any religious work." The man became angry and left, saying:

"Very well, don't listen to me." He walked a small distance, came back and said: "It is a very difficult situation. First of all you are not listening to what I am saying, and when I want to depart, you are not allowing me. I cannot even lift my legs." He then sought pardon from Hadrat Wālā and regained his composure only after he got his pardon.

The story of Munshī Safdar Husayn

There was a very respectable and highly regarded chief by the name of Munshī Safdar Husayn of Kākaurī in Kānpūr. He was so arrogant that he would never go to meet any person. He would always remain on the third storey of his building and would come down very rarely. He was extremely arrogant and haughty. He had bad thoughts about Hadrat Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and used to make disparaging remarks about him in his assemblies.

Qādī Wasīy ad-Dīn Sāhib who was also a very honourable and distinguished man of the city took Hadrat Wālā to the Munshī and said to him: "You can have your doubts removed by him [referring to Hadrat Wālā]." He said: "My doubts are based on historical incidents, who can solve them?" He then quoted this Hadīth:

من سبّ أصحابي فقد سبّني، ومن سبّني فقد سبّ الله

The person who hurls abuses at my Companions has hurled abuses at me, and the one who hurls abuses at me has hurled abuses at Allāh taʿālā.

He continues: "It is established that Hadrat Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* made disparaging remarks against Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*." Hadrat Wālā replied immediately: "The above Hadīth applies to non-Sahābah. An example of this is of a king who says: 'If anyone looks at my sons [the princes] full in the eye, I will have his eyes removed.' This does not mean that even if the princes fight among themselves then the same punishment will be meted out to them. There maybe some other punishment, but the same punishment will never ever be meted out to them. It therefore means that if any outsider looks at them with sharp eyes, this punishment will be meted out to him."

When the Munshī could find no answer to Hadrat Wālā's argument, he addressed a Hindū Bengali Bābū who was seated

nearby and said: “Look Bābū Sāhib! Our ‘ulamā’ are resorting to their intelligence.” So Hadrat Wālā said – probably in a raised voice – “So what do you want, they must resort to stupidity?” The Munshī was silenced.

Bearing in mind that the Munshī was put to shame in the presence of all who were present and the fact that he was a senior person, Hadrat Wālā – out of his good character - tried to make up for this. This man had some knowledge of ‘amalīyyāt. So in order to remove some of his humiliation, Hadrat Wālā said: “I sleep very little. Teach me some practice to solve my problem.” When this request was made to him, all his shame disappeared, he became overjoyed and said: “Very well, I will write something on a plate and send it to you periodically. You must drink its water.” Some plates were sent to the Munshī, he would write something on them and send one at a time to Hadrat Wālā. His bond with Hadrat Wālā became so strong that he would occasionally have some delicacies prepared and sent to him.

Relationship With People Of The Neighbourhood

Hadrat Wālā relates: “In the course of my stay in Kānpūr, I always lived in Tapkāpūr district because this is where the Madrasah was. Although the people of this district where very carefree and audacious, they were more intelligent than the residents of the other areas. I lived among them all the time, and their relationship with me was always a loving one. The reason for this is that I too was not hard on them on any particular issue. Furthermore, I was never desirous of anything from them. Instead, I used to assist the poor and needy of the area on certain occasions. We experienced famine on one occasion. So to fulfil the rights of my neighbours, I made a collection and distributed grain and clothing to the poor.”

He relates: Some women brought *jalebīs*[1] to the Jāmi‘ Musjid so that they would be presented as an offering to students who lived there. But the students, who are carefree by nature, ate all the *jalebīs* without making the offering. This caused an uproar and the women came with their husbands. One of the students displayed a lot of wisdom. He rushed to Hadrat Wālā and asked him to come quickly because a serious turmoil was

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[1] A type of Indian sweetmeat.

unfolding. Hadrat Wālā rushed and put an end to the clamour with excellent wisdom. This is how he did it: He slapped a few students and displayed his anger at them. He asked: "How can it be permissible to eat something which belongs to someone without their permission?" When he began hitting the students, the people themselves began saving and rescuing them. Hadrat Wālā then asked the women the price which was paid for the *jalebīs*, collected one paisa from each student and handed over the money. Everyone was happy and the matter was resolved. Hadrat Wālā then explained to them saying: "Wahhābīs live here. You must not bring anything for *fātihāh* and *niyāz* over here." Even when he said this, they did not consider Hadrat Wālā to be a Wahhābī, but the students.

This type of relationship caused not only all the residents of this district but all the people of Kānpūr to love Hadrat Wālā, and respect for him became deeply embedded in their hearts. I now conclude this chapter by providing some details about Hadrat Wālā's teaching methodology.

Simple And Refined Teaching Methodology

Hadrat Wālā's teaching methodology was so simple and refined that when a student attended a few of his lessons, he could not feel satisfied by any other teacher. Hadrat Wālā relates: "I used to bear a lot of fatigue when I was teaching. I used to store the subject matter of the lesson in my mind before teaching. Consequently, my entire lesson was extremely simple, flowing and in sequence. As a result, the most difficult themes used to become most simple for the students and they understood them very easily. Although simplifying the lesson used to exhaust me, the students did not experience any confusion in understanding any aspect. For example, there is a famous discussion in *Sidrā* which is known as *Muthannāt bi at-Takrīr* and which was considered to be extremely complex. When I reached this section, then before even informing the student about it, I provided him with a simple explanation of the main themes without informing him that it concerns a difficult section. I merely explained it to him on the surface. Because I had simplified it so much, he understood it very well."

"This student's name was Maulwī Fadl Haq and he was the first to qualify from Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm. He taught for a long time in Qanūj. Anyway, when he affirmed that he understood the section very well, I said to him: 'This is the

section which is known as *Muthannāt bi at-Takrīr.*' The moment I said this, he became alerted. I said to him: 'Don't worry, we have passed it.' I then asked him: 'Now you tell me, was it a difficult section?' He replied: 'The other students had always frightened us about this section but it turned out to be absolutely simple.' I quoted this couplet to him:

> I had heard a lot of noise about the heart from the people of the past. But when I cut it open, it turned out to be just a drop of blood.

The section was actually very difficult, but because I conducted the lesson without giving any real importance to it and continued in a plain and flowing manner, he understood it very easily. Yes, I myself had to bear a heavy burden to simplify it for him. I placed the burden of others on my head. This was always my methodology in teaching. But the teachers of today do not want to burden themselves in any way. The fact of the matter is that affection is no longer present; a task job is merely being fulfilled. Coincidentally, the annual written exam for Maulwī Fadl Haq contained the question on *Muthannāt bi at-Takrīr*. The examiner was Maulānā 'Abd al-Ghaffār Sāhib, a well-known, sharp and erudite scholar of Kānpūr. Maulwī Fadl Haq had understood this section very well after I had explained it to him so he answered it very well, and the examiner was most impressed. Even the Madrasah authorities preserved his answer so that other students could benefit from it. It was really worth preserving. Just recently I asked Maulānā Sa'īd Ahmad Sāhib Lucknowī, who had been a senior teacher at Jāmi' al-'Ulūm, to search for the answer paper but, unfortunately, it could not be found. It would have been most beneficial for students."

During my present lengthy holiday, I commenced studying Arabic after Hadrat Wālā suggested that I study it. Hadrat Wālā said: "I neither have the time nor the strength or else I would have personally taught you and you would have learnt very quickly. This is especially so with regard to logic. If you were to study just one book on this subject under me, you will have no need whatsoever to study any other book. You would have developed full proficiency with logic."

Method Of Delivering A Lesson

Hadrat Wālā says: "When teaching a lesson, I never explained more than necessary. I sufficed with solving the text. I never wasted the time of students with superfluous points. I used to emphasise this on the teachers under me. In fact, I would occasionally go to check how they were teaching. Many teachers bring out fine and intricate points merely to display their insight. This causes confusion in understanding the actual text. Some of them offer the excuse that as long as such intricate points are not mentioned, the students are not convinced about the teacher's proficiency. But what should they be looking at, the students' conviction or their benefit? Their essential benefit lies in explaining and solving the actual text of the book because this is the only way of developing capability. Once their capabilities are developed, they will be able to understand intricate and subtle points automatically. This ought to be the main focus of the teacher."

Weekly Speech Contests

Hadrat Wālā adds: "There is no need for these new practices which have sprung up – practices like weekly speech contests and debates. In fact, they are quite harmful because instead of concentrating on the lessons of the week, the students pay more attention to preparing for the weekly programmes. First of all, there is no need whatsoever for this type of practice lessons because once the text books are understood thoroughly, the ability to speak, write and debate will be developed automatically. If there is enthusiasm in this regard, the student must be made to deliver a speech connected to the text books which he is studying. In this way, he will be able to practise the art of speaking and will not affect his studies. In fact, his knowledge of his text books will become more consolidated."

Three Essentials For Developing Academic Capability

Based on his experience, Hadrat Wālā advises students to adhere to three practices. He says: "If you do this, I guarantee you will acquire academic capability. (1) Ensure you study the next day's lesson. This is not a difficult task because the purpose of it is merely to differentiate between what you know and what you do not. You do not have to strive any further. (2) You must study the lesson under your teacher after having

understood it thoroughly. Do not proceed without understanding. If the teacher is not inclined to explain it at present, you can get him to explain it later. (3) You must explain the meaning to yourself. Once you adhere to these three points, you do not have to worry. Whether you remember the lesson or not, you will certainly develop academic capability by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*. These three points are on the level of an obligation. Then there is one point which is desirable, viz. you must revise some of your past work on a daily basis.

A Pure Fountain Of Knowledge

In short, Hadrat Wālā was an expert in the field of teaching. Even now, most of his themes in his assemblies are most beneficial to students. He explains intricate points which are found to be useful by even senior teachers. A few teachers who used to teach with Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī said to him: "Why do you go to Thānah Bhawan during the holidays? You should rather occupy your time studying books which would increase your academic knowledge."

When Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib related this to Hadrat Wālā, he asked him: "Okay, leave aside the spiritual benefits, tell me, after establishing a bond with me, did you find any assistance in your teaching as opposed to before your coming here?" He replied: "Hadrat, I experienced tremendous help; I perceive a clear difference." Hadrat Wālā said: "Very well, if anyone mentions this again, all you have to tell them is that you go there [Thānah Bhawan] to study."

Love For Students

From the incidents and events related in this chapter, the reader must have gauged that Hadrat Wālā possessed total expertise in passing on and teaching external sciences as well. Although it has been quite some time since he is engaged in internal and spiritual instruction, he still has a lot of affinity with the external sciences. He has so much of respect and love for scholars that he respects and reveres even his juniors, and is most affectionate towards students. When they come to him from Deoband and Sahāranpūr in such large numbers during the holidays, he goes to the extent of providing concessions to his normal rules and regulations. He says: "They [students] belong to my fraternity. How can I apply rules to them? Yes, it is another matter if one of them comes for his rectification. In

such a case, there will also be chastisement. For example, if a person merely goes to meet a doctor, the latter will offer him a cool drink. But if he went for medical treatment, he will have to give him some bitter medication and inform him of what foods to avoid.”

Respect For Scholars And Jurists

Hadrat Wālā refers to himself as a student and says by way of mentioning Allāh’s favours to those who seek superficial Sufism: “I do not know the mystical ways of the mystics. I am merely a student, ask me matters pertaining to the Qur’ān and Hadīth. I simply know the Qur’ān and Hadīth, and consider them to be the essential Sufism.” He also speaks about the intense need for ‘ulamā’ because the system of the Dīn is upheld solely through them. Without them no one will know the injunctions and limits of Islam. Sufism comes after that. He constantly says: “I have more love for Sufis in my heart, but more respect for ‘ulamā’.”

Similarly, he showers immense praises on the services rendered by the jurists. He expresses extreme respect and reverence for them. He says: “The respect which I have for the Sufis is like that of a younger brother towards his elder brother. And my respect for the jurists is like a son’s towards his father. Allāh’s relation with the Sufis is also like that of small children, and with the jurists like that of big boys. The actions and movements of small children are appealing, and they are considered to be unaccountable for many of the things which they do. But the real work is taken from the big boys.”

“May Allāh *ta‘ālā* shower the best rewards on the jurists for the phenomenal services which they rendered to Islam. They made the path absolutely clear for the Muslim community, or else, it would have remained pitch dark. They studied the Qur’ān and Hadīth and extracted such principles which are sufficient until the day of Resurrection. No matter what new issue crops up, the ruling with regard to it can be gauged very easily in the light of those principles. Two groups are sources of tremendous mercies of Allāh *ta‘ālā*, viz. the jurists and the Sufis. These are the physicians of the Muslim community.”

Qualification Certificate

I feel I ought to conclude by writing something about the qualification certificate so that Hadrat Wālā's attention to serving Islamic sciences may become clear, and a beneficial modus operandi may be provided for those involved in the field of teaching and education. The madāris normally issue qualification certificates only to those who have completed their studies. However, Hadrat Wālā was of the opinion that if a student did not study the rational sciences because of disinclination to the subject, disinterest or lack of time, but studied all the traditional sciences; then there was no reason why he should not receive a qualification certificate. Both were therefore issued with certificates. The difference was that the one who completed only the traditional Islamic sciences will have the words "Islamic studies" mentioned in his certificate and not "studies". The printed certificate for both types of students was the same with the only difference being that a blank space was left to fill either of the two previously mentioned words. This will become clear from the following certificate which is quoted as an example:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يسبح لله ما في السموات وما في الأرض الملك القدوس العزيز الحكيم. هو الذي بعث في الأميين رسولا منهم يتلو عليهم اٰياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتٰب والحكمة وإن كانوا من قبل لفي ضلال مبين. واٰخرين منهم لما يلحقوا بهم وهو العزيز الحكيم. ذلك فضل الله يؤتيه من يشآء والله ذو الفضل العظيم. وبعد:

فيقول الفقير إلى الله الغني محمد أشرف علي الحنفي التهانوي عفى عنه ما صغر وما كبر. إن الله سبحانه وتعالى سمى في هذه الاية بعث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم معلما للكتاب والسنة "فضلا عظيما". وكفى بهذا تشريفا لمعلم وتعظيما. وأن أصل العلوم هو الكتاب والسنة واحتيج في تفصيل بعض ما اجمل فيها إلى القياس وإجماع الأمة ولكونهم باللغة العربية، افتقر إلى الفنون الأدبية. ولجمع شتات الفصول مست الحاجة إلى الأصول. ولإقامة الحجة والبرهان على أهل الزيغ والطغيان اضطر إلى قدر من قواعد الميزان. فهذه العلوم التي قد أشير إلى أقسامها وارتباط ما بينهما ونظامها لا بد منها في إحياء الدين، وإقامة مراسم الحق واليقين. وما عدا ذلك من الفنون الفلسفية والخرافات السفهية، فهو في نفسه جهل وشين، وكذب ومين. وإنما يقصد بالتحصيل

لغرضين: أحدهما وهو لا يتجاوز الطالب البحث عن الشر ليجتنب الضر، كما قال حذيفة رضي الله عنه: كان الناس يسئلون رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن الخير وكنت أسئل عن الشر مخافة أن يدركني...الخ. فكأنما عناه القائل بقوله شعر: "عرفت الشر لا للشر لكن لتوقيه – ومن لا يعرف الشر من الخير يقع فيه." وثانيهما هو المتعدي إلى غيره دفع مكائد الفلاسفة وغوائلهم، والقلب عليهم بكفتهم وحبائلهم، ورميهم بقسيمهم وشجهم بعصيهم كما قيل شعر: "سلوا سيوف فلاسف بفلاسف، رضخوا بها هامات اٰل فلاسفا." فالأخذ منها وإن كان أحكم وأشد (بالمعجمة) لكن فيه خطر، والترقي عنها أسلم وأسد (بالمهملة). وهو طريق الحذل. وإن أخي في الله (اسم الطالب).......قد ركب الطريق الأشد (إن كان فارغا من الدرسيات) أو الأسد (إن كان فارغا من الدينيات) وسلكها بجهد وجد حتى بلغ مقاطع الحد من جميع العلوم النافعة، والتي هي للريب (بالتحتية) رافعه بمعنى المزيلة (إن كان فارغا من الدرسيات) أو للرتب (بالفوقية) رافعه بمعنى المعلية (إن كان فارغا من الدينيات) التي كتبها بين الطلاب مشهورة، وفي آخر هذه الوريقة مذكورة مدة إقامة في هذا المدرسة التي هي بحمد الله تعالى مغنمة للفضائل ومكسبة، وهي من سنة (كذا) ھ إلى سنة (كذا) ھ، ولم يزل في أوان تحصيل العلوم يقيم وظائف المدرسة والرسوم من التدريس والإمتحان، والإفتاء والوعظ بالسنة والقرآن، فهو بحمد الله تعالى شاب صالح ذو فضائل جليلة وأخلاق جميلة، حري بأن عمم بعمامة الفضيلة بحضرة العلماء الكرام والمشائخ العظام، اتباعا لسنة خير الأنام عليه أفضل التحية والسلام، وهي ما نقل في در المعارف عن الطبراني قال (الراوي) كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا يولي واليا حتى يعمم ويرخي سدلها من جانب الأيمن نحو الأذن. وأودعه بقلب كئيب وأوصيه وصية المحب إلى الحبيب، أن يجعل الشريعة شعاره، والأدب رتاره، وأن يكون من علماء الآخرة، ولا يبيع الدين بالدنيا فيرجع بصفقة خاسرة، ولا يتباعد عن خدمة العلم وذويه، ويترفق بالمرتحلين إليه وطالبيه، وأن يجتهد إن وفق لعلوم المكاشفة فإن العلم ما في القلب لا ما في الشفة، وأسأله أن لا ينساني من الدعاء ولو بعض حين، أن يتوفاني الله مسلما ويلحقني بالصالحين، ويجمعنا في جنة الفردوس بخدمة نبينا وحبيبنا وحبيب رب العالمين سيد الأنبياء والمرسلين، وصلى الله عليه وسلم أبد الآبدين ودهر الداهرين، وكان هذا في شهر كذا تاريخ كذا يوم كذا سنة كذا مقام كذا عدد كذا. وها قد حان إنجاز الوعد في عد الزبر، وبختمها نختم الأسطر (أسماء الكتب).

Those who completed H̲adīth studies were also given a certificate. It contained the transmission chains for the Six Authentic H̲adīth Collections and the *Muwat̲t̲ā* of Imām Mālik

rahimahullāh. It is a lengthy certificate so we are not quoting it here. In addition to a certificate, each student would receive a turban on which the student's name, madrasah name and year of qualification would be written with silk. In the beginning, those who completed the recitation and memorization of the Qur'ān did not receive turbans. But later, Hadrat Wālā felt that if the students of Hadīth can receive, why should the students of the Qur'ān be deprived? So they also started receiving turbans.

The Traditional Sciences

Hadrat Wālā had certain special opinions with regard to the important issues concerning the rational sciences. Many senior and erudite scholars approved of his opinions. Even after he gave up teaching and settled down in Thānah Bhawan, he continued teaching at least the elementary books of logic to certain special associates. This enabled them to develop proficiency in logic and paved the way for them to study other books.

Shortened Syllabus

Hadrat Wālā formulated a short syllabus for those who did not have sufficient time. He titled it *Damān at-Takmīl fī Zamān at-Taʿjīl* (a guarantee of completion in a short time). He had to author ten new text books for this course. He referred to this collection as *Talkhīsāt ʿAshar* (ten concise texts). He personally taught this syllabus to some of his relatives and found it sufficient. All the above incidents demonstrate the keen interest which Hadrat Wālā had in the external sciences despite having given up teaching and becoming occupied with Sufism. His interest continues to this day and he considers it most essential for the Dīn.

STUDENTS

From a study of the previous chapter the reader must have gauged fully well that Hadrat Wālā lived in Kānpūr for only fourteen years but was able to initiate an excellent system of teaching and education there. Many students from far and wide acquired the higher sciences from him. After qualifying, a large number of them became distinguished scholars who combined the rational and traditional sciences. A large number of scholars received Hadīth certificates from them. We could not establish the exact number of his students and it cannot be done because of their large number. However, we obtained a list of the students who passed through him during his tenure as the head teacher at Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm. A list is attached towards the end of this biography. We did not see the need to make enquiries about those students who came later on. From among those who qualified, there are a few special students who are worthy of mention. A short introduction to them is provided below.

1. Maulānā Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib Bardawānī

He is a distinguished scholar. When Hadrat Wālā vacated his teaching post at Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, he appointed him as his deputy and the head teacher. He continued running the Madrasah for a certain period of time in the same way as Hadrat Wālā had. He then proceeded to Madrasah ʿĀliyah in Calcutta where he taught Islamic subjects. From there he went to Madrasah ʿĀliyah Dhaka. He was pensioned off after reaching a level where he began receiving about 500 rupees per month as a salary.

He is now occupied in teaching Islamic sciences to students free of charge. His memory is extremely powerful. In the course of his stay in Kānpūr, he memorized the Qur'ān in six months although he had other responsibilities of teaching. When he taught the prescribed text books, he used to quote the explanation, story, poem or anecdote in exactly the same lesson, same occasion and in the same manner as given by Hadrat Wālā. He took much delight in doing this and would always attribute it to Hadrat Wālā. During his student days, he memorized the entire grammar book, *Kāfiyah*, and after

qualifying, he would revise it occasionally so that he does not forget it. Hadrat Wālā also appointed him as his khalīfah.

2. Maulānā Rashīd Sāhib Kānpūrī

He was an intelligent, bright, sharp, well-mannered and humble person. He had become a teacher at Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm while Hadrat Wālā was still teaching there. When Hadrat Wālā appointed Maulānā Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib as the first teacher, he appointed Maulānā Rashīd Sāhib as the second in charge. He remained in this post for quite some time and also carried out the duty of issuing fatwās in a beautiful manner because he had special affinity with jurisprudence. When Maulānā Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib went to Madrasah ʿĀliyah Calcutta, Maulānā Rashīd Sāhib was offered a high salary to join him there. He did not live too long. He suffered from a stroke and passed away. May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate his stages in Paradise.

3. Maulānā Ahmad Alī Sāhib

He was a pious personality who possessed many excellent qualities. He combined the internal and external sciences. He was the first khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā. He was an expert in the field of jurisprudence. So much so, when Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* posed certain juristic questions to him, he was most impressed by him and said that he has great affinity with this subject. His expertise in jurisprudence can be gauged from the fact that he was the one who wrote the first five parts of *Bahishtī Zewar* after Hadrat Wālā had instructed him to do so. Thousands of Muslim men and women benefited from this book, are benefiting from it, and – inshā Allāh – will continue benefiting from it until the day of Resurrection. He passed away before he could complete it. He passed away at a very young age or else people would have benefited tremendously from him. May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate his stages in Paradise.

4. Maulānā Sādiq al-Yaqīn Sāhib Karsauwī

He was a senior practising scholar of sensitive disposition, extremely intelligent and very perceptive. He was a khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu*. He was very particular about piety to the extent that he said to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion: "I fear Allāh *taʿālā* might take me to task for

being so pious.” Although he was from the progeny of a shaykh, he abhorred innovations and baseless customs to the extent that he had severe differences with his father on the issue of maulūd. Hadrat Wālā wrote an emotional letter to his father in which he explained this issue in an extremely soft tone, with many details and proofs. Subsequently, all differences were resolved. Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī was most pleased by this reconciliation and gave due appreciation to the letter. The letter has been printed under the title *Maktūb Mahbūb al-Qulūb*.

He used to undertake severe spiritual exertion especially with regard to eating and sleeping less. This caused him to become thin and frail. Hadrat Wālā used to prohibit him time and again because present day people cannot bear such exertion. But he was overenthusiastic so he did not desist. He eventually became extremely weak and illnesses befell him one after the other. This caused an impediment in carrying out certain desirable actions. He regretted his exertion and said to Hadrat Wālā: “If I recover from this illness, I will – inshā Allāh – live comfortably and eat and drink to my fill.” Unfortunately, he did not recover and passed away at a young age. May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate his ranks in Paradise.

5. Maulānā Fadl Haq Sāhib

He was the first of Hadrat Wālā’s students to qualify. He was a very capable scholar. He wrote an excellent explanation of *Muthannāt bi at-Takrīr* in the final examination which was very much appreciated by his examiner and the Madrasah authorities. His explanation was preserved by the Madrasah. He was a teacher in Qanūj for some time and passed away. May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate his ranks in Paradise.

6. Maulānā Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib

Shah Sāhib was an extremely intelligent, sharp, able and brilliant scholar; and a Sufi of strong conditions who engaged in different forms of remembrance. He had pledged allegiance to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* via correspondence, but the responsibility of his education was given to Hadrat Wālā and he also became Hadrat Wālā’s khalīfah. He was completely overcome by fear of Allāh *taʿālā* to the extent that Hadrat Wālā said: “I did not see such effects of fear on anyone else.” His hands and feet would become cold during spiritual ecstasy and

he would scream and shout. When Hadrat Wālā had initiated a circle of attention during his early days of enthusiasm, Shāh Sāhib who was studying under Hadrat Wālā at the time attended these circles. He used to experience unique conditions, states, ecstasy and expositions. A simplified version of Hadrat Wālā's well-known book, *Qasd as-Sabīl ilā Maulā al-Jalīl*, was compiled by him for the benefit of the masses. He was extremely humble despite his short temper. Very often he would speak in harsh tones to a person, but soon thereafter would present himself before him and seek his pardon.

Towards the end, he came to remain in Hadrat Wālā's service and passed away in Shaʿbān 1344 A.H. in Thānah Bhawan. He did not have a very long life. He was the first person to be buried in the graveyard which was set aside as an endowment by Hadrat Wālā. May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate his stages in Paradise.

7. Maulānā Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Bijnaurī

His father was a high ranking official but very religious at the same time. Instead of directing his children towards Western education, he turned their focus towards studying Islam. Hakīm Sāhib enjoyed a lofty academic position. He could very easily pen down Hadrat Wālā's statements and admonitions as Hadrat Wālā was speaking. He used to pen them in Arabic because Arabic words are short and comprehensive, and convert them into Urdu later on. He translated the Arabic version of *Munājāt Maqbūl* into excellent and meaningful Urdu. Hadrat Wālā speaks very highly of this translation, and says: "On several occasions, I would first try to work out the Urdu translation in my head and then compare it to Hakīm Sāhib's translation. I always found his translation to be better."

He was the first person to start penning Hadrat Wālā's statements and admonitions. These proved to be a great mercy of Allāh *taʿālā* for the Muslim community. This was followed by the recording of thousands of mawāʿiz and then their publishing. These benefited the Muslim community so much that it is beyond imagination. Hadrat Wālā's well-known work, *al-Intibāhāt al-Mufīdah ʿan al-Ishtibāhāt al-Jadīdah*, was written as an answer to the doubts of modernists. Hakīm Sāhib wrote an excellent commentary to this work. His academic acumen and expertise in the rational sciences are clearly gauged from it.

He also wrote a simplified version of Hadrat Wālā's *Shauq-e-Watan*. He is an expert in the field of medicine, and a famous and well-known physician of Meerut. He is the inventor of many beneficial and unique formulations and medicines. He has a very sensitive and perceptive disposition and temperament, so much so that he can perceive a person's inclination, character and temperament merely from looking at his writing. He is also able to distinguish between a sinner and pious person by just looking at their urine samples.

He wrote the ninth part of *Bahishtī Zewar* and the *Bahishtī Gauhar* – in which he penned his experiences, procedures and medications for the treatment of all types of illnesses and ailments. He did a great favour to the Muslims because countless of them were cured through these treatments and suggestions. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards in both the worlds.

Acting under the advice of Hadrat Wālā, he wrote *Tibbī Jauhar*, in which he wrote about the permissibility or impermissibility of various types of medicines. He filled a huge vacuum in this way. He wrote several other useful books, e.g. *Ma'mūlāt Ashrafīyyah, Majālis al-Hikmat, Amthāl 'Ibrat*, etc.

His is also a high-ranking spiritual doctor and from among Hadrat Wālā's senior khulafā'. He is very particular about piety and is vigilant over the most intricate and subtle doubts. Honesty and sincerity are his salient features, and servitude and submission are his conditions.

During his hajj journey, the driver of the vehicle refused to stop the car to perform salāh. Hakīm Sāhib got ready to jump off while it was moving. But look at Allāh's power, something went wrong with the car and it stopped on its own. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* and the blessings of Hakīm Sāhib, all the passengers were able to perform their salāh with ease.

He is very desirous of doing acts of welfare. He treats students and the poor for free, while paying full attention to their treatment. Those of his acquaintances who intending going for hajj receive special medications which would be needed for the trip. He also gives them other necessities, e.g. a map showing the direction of the Ka'bah. Most of these items are given to them as gifts. He is very concerned about his neighbours and relatives. He memorized the Qur'ān at an old age, and is an

expert at correcting those who memorized the Qur'ān. In short, he is a collection of great excellences and a treasure house of beautiful qualities.

8. Maulānā Sayyid Is-hāq Alī Sāhib Kānpūrī

He is a very capable and talented teacher, and a highly paid Arabic professor at Allāhābād University. He is of very sound disposition, extremely humble, a man with a strong bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*, and a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā. When he was departing for hajj, he wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā. Every word of the letter expresses his extreme yearning and, at the same time, his genuine servitude and submission. He also wrote the following couplet with extreme remorse and regret.

> When I went to perform tawāf of the Ka'bah, I was not permitted to enter the Haram. I was told: What did you do outside the Haram which could make you eligible to enter it now?

He writes further on: "I did not have the courage to present myself before the Ka'bah, but what can I do, I have to fulfil the obligation of hajj also. I am therefore going with my head hanging down in shame."

9. Maulānā Mazhar al-Haq Sāhib

He was a man of letters who was adept at writing poetry and prose in Arabic and Persian. His capabilities were well-known in Bengal. May Allāh *ta'ālā* elevate his stages in Paradise.

10. Maulānā Sa'īd Ahmad Sāhib Itāwī

He was a distinguished judge in Gwalior and also a chief of his family. Although he did not teach, he took part in many Islamic works and rendered great services to Islam in this way. May Allāh *ta'ālā* elevate his stages in Paradise.

Note: These ten are from among the distinguished students of Hadrat Wālā.

□

Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Uthmānī, Maulānā Sa'īd Ahmad And Maulānā Mazhar Alī Khān

Finally, I am quoting a letter of Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib Thānwī which he wrote in fulfilment of a request which I made

to him. He, his elder brother, Maulānā Sa'īd Ahmad, and Hadrat Wālā's younger step-brother, Maulānā Muhammad Mazhar 'Alī Sāhib studied certain books under Hadrat Wālā. Details in this regard are mentioned in the following letter.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Peace and salutations to the Chosen One of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred many bounties on me. A very major bounty which He conferred on me was the opportunity of studying under Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummah Mujaddid al-Millah when I was only 12 or 13 years old. During those days, Hadrat Wālā used to teach a few students – specifically my brother, Maulānā Sa'īd Ahmad Sāhib, the correct recitation of the Qur'ān. These classes were conducted after the maghrib salāh and occasionally after the fajr salāh. I would also attend. I, together with my brother, studied every lesson of *Tanshīt at-Tab'* under Hadrat Wālā and a portion of *al-Mukarrarah.* During those days, Maulānā 'Abdullāh Sāhib Gangohī and my brother used to study the *Mathnawī* under Hadrat Wālā after the 'asr salāh. I was very particular about attending these lessons as well. Then when Maulānā 'Abdullāh Sāhib took leave from Dār al-'Ulūm Thānah Bhawan to spend some time in the company of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī, I began Arabic lessons under Hadrat Wālā, particularly *at-Talkhīsāt al-'Ashr*. My remaining lessons were under the tutelage of my brother. From *at-Talkhīsāt al-'Ashr*, I clearly remember studying the following under Hadrat Wālā: *Talkhīs al-Manār ma'a al-Madār, Talkhīs al-Miftāh, Talkhīs Hidāyah al-Hikmah ma'a Dirāyah al-'Ismah, Talkhīs al-Mirqāt, Talkhīs al-Bidāyah li al-Ghazzālī, 'Asharah Turūs Talkhīs Mi'ah Durūs*. I am inclined to think that the remaining sections were also studied under Hadrat Wālā.

My brother, Maulānā Sa'īd Ahmad completed the syllabus of *Damān at-Takmīl* under Hadrat Wālā. The major books of this syllabus, viz. *Taysīr al-Wusūl, Taudīh wa Talwīh, Sharh 'Aqā'id Nasafī, Jalālayn Sharīf*, and a few textbooks of the Dars Nizāmī were studied by my brother under Hadrat Wālā in my presence. He also studied a few volumes of the *Mathnawī* under him. I am not sure if all six were completed.

My uncle, Janāb Mazhar 'Alī Sāhib Thānwī who is presently the assistant director at the C.I.D. office also studied the syllabus of *Damān at-Takmīl* under Hadrat Wālā. He studied all this very well and thoroughly because he used to be with Hadrat Wālā

all the time – at home and on journeys. Hadrat Wālā was very happy with him by virtue of his Allāh-bestowed intelligence. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable him to become inclined to the Islamic sciences and Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* once again, and returns to his origins so that the seed which Hadrat Wāla had planted may flourish and the fruits may be displayed in this world and the Hereafter. Āmīn.

Was salām
Zafar Ahmad, *may Allāh pardon him.*
7 Safar 1354 A.H.

Love And Affection For Students

Hadrat Wālā has many capable students who are holding high positions, earning top salaries, and who combine the external with the internal. He has a very deep bond and attachment with his students. He often says: "I do not have as much a bond with my associates as I have with my students because I am not so open with them as I am with my students." Even his students had developed intense love for Hadrat Wālā during their student days. Those who studied under him were most fortunate. Congratulations to them.

SOUND ADMONITION

Allāh-Bestowed Capability

Delivering lectures or, in other words, conveying Allāh's injunctions is the most important Sunnah of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. Allāh *taʿālā* places this special attribute in the natural disposition of those ʿulamā' who are sent to this world as inheritors of the Prophets. It is especially essential for this attribute to be found in the most perfect form in a person who was destined to become a specialist physician of the Muslim community and its reviver. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this Allāh-bestowed capability is found in Hadrat Wālā from the very beginning. The effects of it were visible from his childhood. It was his childhood game to go into a musjid, climb the pulpit and mumble something as if he was delivering a lecture. This was related in the chapter on his childhood. Presently, it is so obvious that Hadrat Wālā is the Chief of Lecturers that there is absolutely no need whatsoever to provide any proofs in this regard. The mere appearance of the sun is proof of its existence. The world is witnessing it and affirming it.

There are countless exhortations of Hadrat Wālā which are available in print form. Any person wanting to verify this quality has to merely read them. This despite the fact that they do not contain Hadrat Wālā's words in their entirety, because no matter how fast a person may be in taking down notes, Hadrat Wālā's fluent and flowing speech could not be recorded word for word. As for the eloquent, comprehensive, expressive and meaningful words which emanate from his mouth, these can only be appreciated by the one who is physically present in his assembly. I can say without any exaggeration that Hadrat Wālā's informal assembly sounds like the reading of a certain intricate academic and practical thesis which was written after much research and investigation by an erudite research scholar who prepared it after intense pondering and reflection. He is not like other lecturers who merely blurt out whatever comes to their mind without bearing in mind their original topic, present it without any sequence, and terminate it wherever they like.

A sufficient proof of the value and mass appeal of Hadrat Wālā's exhortations is that very rarely will you come across personalities in the past whose exhortations were penned without the personality instructing for them to be penned or his special associates making efforts in this regard. Instead, they were penned by ordinary people who were most interested in them and paid particular attention to them. Then they are printed so profusely and accepted by all sections of the community while Hadrat Wālā is still living.

Speech Practice During Student Days

Hadrat Wālā was enthusiastic about delivering talks since his student days; in fact, since his childhood, as mentioned earlier. During his student days, he got some of his classmates to form a group and to organize a weekly speech practice on Friday nights. Although this group did not have any formal union, the work continued. It was not like the unions of today which have lengthy names and titles but whose work is superficial and virtually non-existent. Many such lectures were delivered in Deoband.

First Public Lecture

Hadrat Wālā's marriage was performed when he was still a student. He went to attend a function in Thānah Bhawan. While his father was proceeding to the musjid for the jumuʿah salāh, he said to Hadrat Wālā's maternal uncle, Janāb Munshī Wājid ʿAlī Sāhib: "I am busy today, so I will go to the Haud Wālī Musjid for jumuʿah. You must make him [Hadrat Wālā] deliver a lecture in the Jāmiʿ Musjid after the jumuʿah salāh." When he informed Hadrat Wālā, he refused out of shame. But his uncle did not pay heed and made an announcement on his own. Hadrat Wālā was now forced to deliver a talk. He relates: "I was so nervous that I did not even sit on the pulpit. I sat on the ground with my gaze down and commenced a talk on the beginning verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah."

The Focus Of Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad

Soon thereafter, Hadrat Wālā saw a dream in which he saw Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib Muhaddith Thānwī *rahimahullāh* who had passed away about two years ago. There is a place known as Dohītaro which lies between Muzaffar Nagar and Charthāwal. The Maulānā had many disciples in

this town. Across the musjid is a banyan tree which exists to this day, and the Maulānā was seated on a bed under this tree. Hadrat Wālā presented himself enthusiastically before him, sat next to him and said: "Hadrat, I am very pained by your demise." He replied: "The focus which I had on you when I was alive exists now as well." The Maulānā then said in the dream itself: "I heard that you got married!?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Yes." He said: "Congratulations."

The Maulānā was a very famous and well-known scholar and Sufi master who used to deliver many talks and lectures in Thānah Bhawan. This is why Hadrat Wālā says: "I am inclined to think that Maulānā visited me in my dream subsequent to my delivering my talk."

A Lecture On The Occasion Of The 'Urs Of Shaykh Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī

Apart from the speaking practices which Hadrat Wālā had during his student days, his first real general talk was the one which he delivered in the Jāmi' Musjid of Thānah Bhawan under the request of his father. He was about eighteen years old at the time. His next talk was when he went to his in-laws in Gangoh. Coincidentally, it was the time of the 'urs of Shaykh 'Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. There too, the people insisted on him to deliver a lecture. Many senior family members of the Shaykh were present.

Hadrat Wālā commenced his speech by providing many virtues and merits of the Auliyā' of Allāh. Then he went on to refuting innovations and the harms which they caused in society. He commanded much respect despite his tender age, so despite differences with him, they used to ask him to lead them in salāh, and those who were present in the gathering remained seated and listened to his talk. However, when Hadrat Wālā stepped forward to perform the maghrib salāh, an old man separated himself from the row and performed his salāh on his own. On the completion of the salāh, someone asked the old man the reason for his action. He replied: "He speaks ill of the pious elders, that is why I did not perform salāh behind him." He was asked: "Which pious elders did he insult? We only heard him speaking of their merits." He replied: "He spoke out against the small drum." He was asked: "Is a small drum your pious elder?" He replied: "Yes, a small drum is my pious elder."

The people laughed when they heard this. The old man went into a rage and said: "Even if Jibrīl *ʿalayhis salām* were to come and speak out against it I will not accept." All the people, even the pīr zāde,[1] reprimanded and rebuked him, and said: "These are ʿulamā' and they have a right to teach us the injunctions of the Sharīʿah. The Sufis always showed due regard to the Sharīʿah, submitted before the injunctions of the Sharīʿah, and never contradicted it."

In short, even the pīr zāde defended Hadrat Wālā. Later on, the old man asked the people whether Hadrat Wālā had come and looked at the jubbah sharīf.[2] When he was informed that he did, he went to Thānah Bhawan to ask Hadrat Wālā to pardon him. Hadrat Wālā relates: "The pīr zāde of the past were at least okay in the sense that they used to engage in Allāh's remembrance even though they were caught up in evils. But today, the majority of them are mere businessmen [who try to enrich themselves by virtue of their relationship with their pious forbears]."

Refusing Any Recompense For Delivering A Lecture

Hadrat Wālā never accepted any type of remuneration for delivering a lecture. So much so that he would even refuse a gift which appeared to be a remuneration. On one occasion, Safīyyah Begum, the daughter of Nawāb Siddīq Hasan Khān Sāhib, requested Hadrat Wālā to deliver a talk, and presented him with a considerable sum of money at the end of his talk. Hadrat Wālā refused blankly. She said: "This is not a remuneration." He replied: "It certainly appears like one. People will suspect that it was given as a remuneration, and no one will be able to request a speech without having a gift ready." She said: "Have something to eat." He replied: "Send it to my house so that it does not appear to be a remuneration. Anyway, I am a guest at someone else's house." He agreed to this because he knew – from past experience with the family – that she was sincere.

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[1] Pīr zāde refers to the progeny of a pious personality or Sufi.

[2] This refers to the overcoat which used to be worn by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangohī *rahimahullāh*.

The Subject Matter Of His Talks

Hadrat Wālā used to deliver a talk at whichever place he travelled to. He used to say: "I feel ashamed to eat at a place without having delivered a talk there." Hadrat Wālā never included any subject matter which was specifically requested by any person. Instead, he would say what Allāh *taʿālā* placed in his heart at the exact time of delivering his lecture. Yes, it is a different matter if he felt the need to include the requested subject in the course of his talk or it came into his talk coincidentally. On one occasion, a person requested him to speak out against those who play the drum. He replied: "It is not my habit to speak out against anyone in particular. I will explain whatever comes to my mind."

In one place, there were differences between the authorities of two madrasahs. He was requested to speak on this subject in order to remove their differences. But Hadrat Wālā did not touch on the topic at all because if he were to speak in favour of one side, the other side would think he was opposed to it and that he was propped up by the other side. There will be no benefit in this. He used to say: "When delivering a talk, the sole objective must be for the common good. Most topics which are requested by people are based on certain personal objectives. The results of such talks are therefore not good."

A Strange Incident

Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion: "I give a talk as best as I can. I do not have an opportunity to think about it before hand or to refer to any book. What I say is what comes to my mind at the time. In the course of one such lecture, the thought came to my mind that I have some power of expression, even though it may not be on the level of seasoned orators."

After this, I sat down to deliver a talk but could not proceed. I tried my utmost to think of something but could not say anything. My speech could not move forward and no subject matter came to mind. I read a verse, translated it, but then I just shut down. I brought in some synonyms to the translation thinking that this may open the way for me to say something more, but nothing happened. I was compelled into thinking about one of my past talks, after all, I had delivered many talks before this. But no such topic came to mind, and my brains were not functioning at all. I realized I was unable to say

anything. I was eventually forced to address the gathering thus: "Dear brothers! No subject is coming to my mind at the moment. What can I say to you? Let us make duʿā'." We made duʿā' and concluded the assembly. In short, the talk terminated before it could even start. I was quite embarrassed because arrangements had been made for this talk, carpets had been laid out, a stage had been set, and so on. The people too had assembled very enthusiastically, but I could not say anything. Everyone was astonished because this had never occurred in the past. But I was not surprised because I knew that this was Allāh's treatment for my pride and an answer to my thoughts which crossed my mind occasionally. That is, the thought that I am quite adept at delivering lectures. Allāh *taʿālā* showed to me that everything is through His inspiration and that I have no power whatsoever. I repented from these thoughts and never experienced such a situation again. It happened just this one time in my entire life. Allāh *taʿālā* taught me a lesson for the rest of my life so that I do not have the slightest thought that I can deliver a lecture whenever I like. He taught me that whatever I say is solely through His inspiration."

Style Of Speaking

Hadrat Wālā always commenced his talk with the normal prelude [of praising Allāh *taʿālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] and by reading a verse of the Qur'ān or quoting a Hadīth. Most of the time he commenced with Qur'ānic verses, and occasionally with Ahādīth. Hadrat Wālā never wasted time singing poems or quoting rhymed couplets as is the case with orators in general. He always delivered a most eloquent and meaningful lecture which contained evocative and strong words. Despite this, his audience used to be left entranced. So much so that some of his opponents used to discourage people from attending his talks by frightening them off by saying that he resorts to some type of soothsaying. Whereas whatever effect and impact he had was by virtue of his absolute integrity and sincerity – both of which were most salient qualities in him. In the course of his lecture he would quote most appropriate Arabic, Persian and Urdu poems which would inject life into his subject matter and cause the audience to respond spontaneously. It seemed as if the poem which he quoted was written specifically for that occasion. Although Hadrat Wālā never paid particular attention

to memorizing poems, he knows a very large number. A scholar collated all Hadrat Wālā's poems which he quoted in his talks and writings. They number close to a thousand.

Quoting Poetry

Hadrat Wālā never rendered poetry as though it was music. If he recalled an appropriate poem, he would quote it spontaneously in his unique appealing manner, causing the audience to go into a sort of trance. I recall an ordinary person's statement. He said: "When he reads a poem, he grasps my heart." Hadrat Wālā delivered a lecture in Allāhābād on one occasion. He had a flu so his voice was quite heavy. Someone remarked at the end of the talk: "The talk was very good but his voice is not good." On hearing this, Hadrat Wālā said in his next lecture: "I am not a musician, not the child of a musician, nor the student of a musician."

Hadrat Wālā has the power to quote appropriate examples and stories similar to the power which Hadrat Maulānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī *rahimahullāh* had. He is able to draw unique lessons and conclusions from useless anecdotes and immoral stories. These anecdotes, stories and examples sometimes reduce the audience to tears and sometimes to laughter. Hadrat Wālā's lectures contain all the higher sciences, but they are always overpowered by the subject of Sufism, and every lecture concludes on this subject.

Impact And General Acceptance

No matter which place Hadrat Wālā goes to, people from distant areas come to visit him. Repeated requests are made to him to deliver talks in their areas, and they take him for this purpose. The entire audience remains seated in great anticipation before the commencement of his talk. It is as though each person there is saying:

> Make your appearance because the people are going mad and getting distressed. Open your lips because men and women – everyone – are begging you.

In the course of his talk, the entire audience seems to be entranced. I have seen some senior leaders and wealthy people sitting in the intense heat without moving from their places. In most of his lectures the people are reduced to tears while others go into an ecstasy. In the course of a large assembly at

Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband where Hadrat Wālā was delivering his speech, a person was overcome by an intense feeling of ecstasy which was not subsiding. This resulted in confusion among the audience and the talk remained unfinished because the man began jumping on the people. Some of them got injured and others began dispersing.

A man was completely overcome by Hadrat Wālā's lecture on the occasion of Mu'tamar al-Ansār in Murādābād. When Hadrat Wālā got down from the stage, the man fell at his feet and began rolling in front of him. He did not even think about the fact that he could be trampled by the large crowd. He was totally enamoured by Hadrat Wālā, severed his relations and went to Thānah Bhawan on the same day or one or two days later. But due to an absence of affinity, Hadrat Wālā did not accept his pledge of allegiance. There are countless such people who were so impressed by Hadrat Wālā's talks that they gave up sins forever, turned in repentance and became the seekers of Allāh *taʿālā*.

An Expression Of What Lies In The Heart

All this was the effect of the true and genuine heart which Hadrat Wālā possessed. He says: "When I advise any person, I desire with all my heart and soul that he must become like that." Most of Hadrat Wālā's subject matter in his talks is an expression of what is in his heart and of his lofty spiritual conditions. This is why his every talk is a manifestation of the following couplet of Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*:

> O friends! Listen to this story because it is really an expression of my own condition.

Hadrat Wālā said: "When I perceive any matter within me which needs to be rectified, I give a talk about it. I benefit tremendously from this because when I am speaking, I feel passionate about what I am saying and this has an effect on my heart. Furthermore, I also feel ashamed over the fact that I too should carry out the advice which I am giving to others. My lecture titled *Waʿz al-Ghadab* (a lecture on anger) was delivered with the same purpose."

In short, every talk of Hadrat Wālā was an expression of the feelings of his heart. A poet says:

> There is no need to describe enthusiasm because the fire which is raging in my heart can be identified from the heat which is in my speech.

Impact On Modernists And People Of Other Religions

I personally heard people holding high positions and those who acquired western education saying: "We never thought there is such a lecturer among the maulwīs who can prove every single point with logical and rational proofs." I myself experienced this on several occasions. Many highly educated Hindus, Christians and Shīʿas were impressed by the printed versions of Hadrat Wālā's lectures. A Hindu teacher hailing from a mountainous region who was well known for his strictness on his religion used to take Hadrat Wālā's printed lectures one after the other and study them. Some senior Shīʿah scholars used to borrow these lectures from me through another person, study them closely, and use the subject matter to embellish their own assemblies.

A lecturer from Pānīpat used to pray a lot for Hadrat Wālā. He used to say: "May Allāh keep him well, I now have the means for my sustenance. I memorized a few lectures and deliver them at different places. I receive many gifts and presents, and people think I am a very powerful scholar." One day I was sitting in a train and reading *Rāhat al-Qulūb* (comfort for the hearts) to my friends who were seated near me. A Hindu overheard it and said: "This book is certainly written by a very distinguished scholar." Similarly, when the ship's owner heard me reading Hadrat Wālā's *Tarīq al-Qalandar* during my journey to Rangoon, he thought I was its writer. He pointed towards me and said: "Had this person studied English he would have become a judge."

A highly qualified Maratha master who was employed by the state was present in Hadrat Wālā's lecture which he delivered in Bhopal. He used to say: "I heard many distinguished lecturers in India and overseas, but I never saw in them what I saw in him today. I never saw anyone speaking without first having prepared some notes, and then delivering such a lengthy talk which is so scholarly, sequenced, and that too, which is delivered with such fluency."

A western-educated person holding a high position in Bharatpūr heard Hadrat Wālā's lecture and said: "I was

astonished at the fact that he was speaking about a purely religious matter, i.e. about fasting. Despite this, his subject matter and themes were such that every person belonging to every other religion could have applied them to his own religious principles." After delivering a talk in Kānpūr, a celebrated lawyer came to Hadrat Wālā and addressed him by quoting the following couplet with full passion:

> By whose excellence have you reached perfection!?
> By whose beauty are you illuminated!?

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "The thought occurred to me to reply to him with the following couplet:

> I reached perfection through the excellence of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. I am illuminated by the beauty of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib.

But I felt ashamed to make unnecessary claims to excellence and beauty."

A carefree lawyer said to Hadrat Wālā after a lecture: "How did you become entrapped by the maulwīs!? Had you passed the board exams, there would have been no lawyer like you."

Affirmation From Elders

Hadrat Wālā was delivering a talk in Gangoh on one occasion. In the meantime, when anyone went to meet Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, he would say to the person: "Why have you come here. Go and listen to the divinely-inspired talk which is being delivered." Similarly, the chief of debaters, Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say: "A real talk is one regarding which no one has an opportunity to point a finger."

An Effective Method Of Rectifying The Masses And The Elite

There are countless testimonies to show that Hadrat Wālā has no equal in oratory. Anyone who did not get an opportunity of listening to him can study his printed lectures and testify this himself. Every other day Hadrat Wālā receives letters in which people inform him that they benefited tremendously from his printed lectures and their entire lives changed for the better. An untold number of western educated people who were enamoured by fashion and freedom became genuinely religious

people through the blessings of studying his lectures. They gave up their western lifestyles, photographs and fashion.

I myself know many such people who were ardent followers of Western fashion and held atheistic beliefs. But they happened to come across a certain lecture of Hadrat Wālā, read it and were so absorbed by it that their entire lives changed. In fact, some of them progressed to the level of becoming his khulafā'. There were some dervishes who considered the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah to be two separate entities and went to the extent of not performing salāh. But when they read Hadrat Wālā's *al-Arwāh*, they repented from their beliefs and began performing salāh.

Hadrat Wālā's lectures related to maulūd and his *Thalj as-Sudūr* and *Badr al-Budūr* have been printed together. On studying these, certain fanatics of maulūd had their misunderstandings removed and their beliefs were put in order. So much so that they began rectifying the beliefs of others although they neither met Hadrat Wālā nor referred to him. Many of those whose lives had become bitter because of calamities, experienced comfort and relief after studying *Rāhat al-Qulūb*. He delivered a lecture to provide solace to the relatives of one who had passed away. A study of this lecture is most consoling and comforting on such occasions. In short, thousands of people experience religious, material, academic and practical benefits from Hadrat Wālā's lectures and exhortations. O Allāh! Increase and proliferate their benefits.

The Story Of A Person Holding A Governmental Position

Hadrat Wālā went to Shamlah and stood up to deliver a talk. As was his habit, his clothes were absolutely simple, but clean and neat. A western educated person whispered to the organizer of the function who happened to be his friend and an official in a government position: "Look at the clothing of your ʿulamā'! It is as though he just relieved himself and came here." The official replied: "I am not going to give any reply to you now. You can say whatever you want at the end of the lecture, and I will give you an answer." When the lecture ended, the official said to him: "Okay, you can now say what you want to." The man was initially silent. He then said: "Yes, it was my foolishness. I assumed that the talk will be like the clothes. But the complete opposite happened. Glory to Allāh. Glory to Allāh.

What an excellent talk! By merely looking at his clothes one could not gauge what a great man he is.”

Someone else who was present related this incident to Hadrat Wālā. When he commenced his next talk, he directed his attention to the western educated person, but in a very cultured and subtle manner. He said: “I have learnt that some people do not like my clothes. I do not wish to speak on the subject of whether it is essential for a speaker to be well-dressed or not. Each person has his own taste.”

“Anyway, I will accept, for those people, that a speaker ought to be well-dressed when addressing people. I am basing this on one advantage, viz. good clothes create respect in the person, and when this respect is established, his speech is also respected and increases the effect and impact of his speech. However, the question which arises is from where should those clothes come? Obviously, a considerable amount of money is needed to purchase good clothes. But the present income of the maulwīs can never suffice. So an easy way out is that wherever a lecturer has to deliver a talk, the people of that place must have clothes which appeal to them kept ready for the speaker. Any lecturer who comes must wear those clothes which were set aside for this purpose. When he completes his talk and is about to leave, he must remove those clothes so that they could be used for similar occasions in the future. So I am now waiting for the person to make such arrangements. If he did not make them, he ought to drown himself in shame.” (This was the only sharp sentence in the entire speech). That person was present in the talk and was most embarrassed.

Reply To An Objection Made Against Hadrat Shāh Sāhib’s Speech

I recall another incident which occurred in Shamlah. Janāb Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib [Kashmīrī] *rahimahullāh* and a few other ‘ulamā’ of Deoband had accompanied Hadrat Wālā. A request was made to Shāh Sāhib to speak on the topic of *I‘jāz al-Qur’ān* (the miraculous nature of the Qur’ān). First of all, this was an academic subject [which is not understood easily]. Furthermore, Shāh Sāhib’s academic acumen resulted in him speaking on very intricate points which most of the audience could not understand. The majority of the audience consisted of educated people. After the speech, these educated people began speaking among themselves and were making objections against the speech. They said: “What was the need for Maulānā

to even come here? He should have rather remained in the Deoband Madrasah and addressed the ‘ulamā’.”

Hadrat Wālā was informed of this objection. When it was his turn to address the people, he quoted the above objection and said that it was a useless objection. He added: “You yourselves are responsible for this because you gave us an academic topic which could not be simplified for all to understand. Even the extent to which it could be simplified was wittingly not done because there was some great wisdom behind it. Furthermore, we wanted to demonstrate to you that if you cannot even understand the Urdu speech of ‘ulamā’, how will you be able to understand the Qur’ān and Hadīth?! Deriving rulings from them is far more serious. You people must have realized by now that you are certainly incapable of giving your opinions on matters pertaining to Dīn.” Here too, those who had made objections were quite embarrassed.

Rectifying A Pīr Zāde

A Pīr Zāde brought an ‘ālim with him to attend one of Hadrat Wālā’s lectures in Mārwār. He brought this ‘ālim so that if Hadrat Wālā says anything which is against his beliefs, he will get him to debate Hadrat Wālā. He did this because he feared that some of his followers will lose confidence in him after listening to Hadrat Wālā’s talk. Hadrat Wālā had no knowledge of all this, but – under the inspiration of Allāh *ta‘ālā* and appropriate to the situation - he mentioned something in this regard. In the course of his talk he said: “It is our duty to financially help the children of the Sufis. But no religious services should be taken from them, and one should not take the trouble of asking them rules and regulations of Islam. This is the responsibility of the ‘ulamā’ because they are qualified for it. But the ‘ulamā’ should not be helped financially because they do not need it in the least. All of them are earning a living sufficient for their needs. As for those children of the Sufis, they have no source of income. So they should be served financially, while the work should be taken from the ‘ulamā’.”

The Pīr Zāde was overjoyed when he heard this. Instead of debating with Hadrat Wālā, he went and kissed his hand. After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: “His joy was futile. He did not realize that I actually chopped off his roots because people will only serve and support those who serve Dīn and from whom they derive benefit.”

Addressing Opponents In A Gathering

It was Hadrat Wālā's practice not to speak on a subject which he was requested to speak on. Instead, he would speak on a subject which was really needed in a particular place and was inspired by Allāh *taʿālā* in his heart at that very moment. As for controversial issues, he was very particular about refraining from them. If these were mentioned incidentally, he would speak about them clearly, but in a pleasant and nice manner. He had many occasions of delivering talks to those who were opposed to the truth and those who were immersed in innovations. But, on the principle of:

اَلْحَقُّ يَعْلُوْ وَلَا يُعْلٰى بِعَوْنِ اللهِ تَعَالٰى

The truth always prevails and, by the help of Allāh, is never prevailed.

He constantly remained victorious and beloved, while the opponents felt defeated and intimidated.

Before he could deliver a talk in Jaunpūr, he received a filthy letter which mentioned four things: (1) You are a jūlāhā (a person belonging to a low caste). (2) You are an ignoramus. (3) You are a kāfir. (4) You must watch what you say in your speech.

Before he could start his speech, he addressed the audience and said: "I need your advice on a certain matter. I received this letter." He then read it before everyone and said: "It states that I am a jūlāhā. Even if I am one, what is so serious about it after all I have not come here to establish any family ties; I have come to convey the teachings of Allāh *taʿālā*. What does this have to do with nationality and which caste I belong to? Anyway, this is not even within a person's choice. Allāh *taʿālā* causes a person to be born in whichever nation He wills. All nations are the creations of Allāh *taʿālā*. They are all good if their character and actions are good. This is the answer to the issue itself. As for whether this accusation is correct or not, there is no need to verify it after having proven that such an argument is of no benefit. But if anyone still wants to verify it, I will write down the names and addresses of the seniors of my hometown, he can go to them and verify that I am not a jūlāhā. And if you have confidence in me, then here I am informing you that I am not a jūlāhā."

“As for the point which states that I am an ignoramus, I admit before you that I am indeed an ignoramus. In fact, I am the most ignorant of all. However, I merely quote before you what I heard from my pious elders and what I read in books. If anyone doubts the authenticity of anything which I say is free not to practise on it.”

“As for the accusation that I am a kāfir, there is no need to go into too much discussion on this subject. I am saying before all of you: ‘I testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh. I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh.’ Even if – Allāh forbid – I was a kāfir, I am no longer one because you heard me reading the kalimah.”

“The final point threatens me to watch what I say. My response to this is that I am not a professional lecturer. When anyone insists that I speak, I say whatever little I know. If you people do not want me to speak, I will certainly not speak. As for ‘watching what I say’, let me tell you frankly that it is not my habit to interfere and meddle with anyone. I do not intentionally say anything which would hurt the feelings of any particular group or could cause a disruption. But if, in the process of investigating the principles of the Sharīʿah, there is a need to mention any such issue which is related to innovative customs, then I do not desist because desisting in this regard will clearly entail betrayal in matters of Dīn. After hearing all this, you people must apprise me of whatever views you have with regard to the lecture which I am about to deliver. If the most insignificant person among you tells me not to speak, I will definitely not speak. But my personal view is that I should be allowed to speak now, and when I say anything which is disagreeable to anyone, I must be stopped immediately. I promise you that even if the lowest among you stops me, I will stop immediately and take my seat. It would be best if the person who wrote this letter were to stop me. If he is shy to say so himself or does not have the courage, he can secretly ask someone else to stop me.”

On hearing this, a Pathan who was a maulwī in the rational sciences, held bidʿatī beliefs and had a lot of influence in that place responded spontaneously: “The person who wrote the letter is an illegitimate. You may continue with your talk, what

kind of Fārūqī[1] are you?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "I am a Fārūqī of a place where the people of this city consider to be a jūlāhā."

When the entire gathering began speaking out against the one who wrote the letter, and especially when the Maulwī Sāhib began hurling abuses at the letter writer, Hadrat Wālā stopped him saying: "Do not be abusive. You should at least respect the musjid." Hadrat Wālā then delivered a powerful speech. In the course of an academic discussion, he unwittingly touched on some customs and innovations. Once he started on this subject, he went into much detail without any fear of anyone. But, as was his practice, he did it with absolute decorum and without causing any ill feelings. Although Hadrat Wālā had given an open permission to anyone to stop him in his tracks, no one had the courage to do it.

> This is the awe of the truth, not of the creation. It is not the awe of the one in tattered and torn clothes. When a person fears Allāh and remains righteous; the jinn, man and every onlooker fear him.

In the beginning, the Maulwī Sāhib was expressing his approval and constantly shouting out: "Sub-hānallāh, Sub-hānallāh" because Hadrat Wālā was speaking about Sufism. But once he spoke in refutation of innovations, the Maulwī Sāhib fell silent. However, he remained seated and continued listening. This too was through the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* because it was learnt later on that this man was extremely fanatical. Whenever he heard any lecturer saying anything which was against his temperament, he would catch the lecturer by his hand and pull him off the pulpit. But this time he did not have the courage. He just remained seated, listening to Hadrat Wālā. There were two reasons for this: (1) It had to do with Hadrat Wālā's Allāh-bestowed awe. (2) The man had to back up what he had said in the beginning. But when the talk ended and people began leaving, the Maulwī Sāhib said to Hadrat Wālā: "What was the need to speak on these issues?"

Another influential Maulwī Sāhib who was also a bid'atī came forward to give a reply, but Hadrat Wālā stopped and said: "He addressed me, you do not have to answer. Let me answer."

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[1] Referring to Hadrat Wālā's lineage which goes up to Hadrat 'Umar Fārūq *radiyallāhu 'anhu* who was well-known for his bravery and forthrightness. (translator)

Hadrat Wālā then addressed the Maulwī Sāhib: "You did not inform me before hand. Had you done, I would have been more careful. Anyway, I said whatever I said because I considered it necessary. But what can we do now, the talk is over. Yes, there is a way out. The people are still present. You can make this announcement: "O people! There was no need for this talk." I will not oppose you when you say it. In this way, you will have the final say. Everyone laughed. Based on the response of the people, the Maulwī Sāhib feared he will be disgraced. So he offered salām and departed immediately.

After he left, the people began speaking out against him. When there was a lot of noise and clamour, Hadrat Wālā stood up and said: "Brothers! You should never abandon your local ʿulamā' for the sake of an outside ʿālim. I am going to Machlī Sheher today. I am specifically addressing the person who sent the letter to me. He must refute my lecture so that both views will be presented before everyone, and you can choose whichever way you like. There is absolutely no need for troublemaking." Thereafter, the other Maulwī Sāhib who had stood up previously to defend Hadrat Wālā although the former held bidʿatī beliefs, stood up once again and said: "Brothers! You all know fully well that I believe in maulūd, standing up for salutations, and so on. But the truth of the matter is that the lecture which the Maulānā delivered today is absolutely correct."

The gathering ended and Hadrat Wālā proceeded to Machlī Sheher. An attempt was made to refute Hadrat Wālā's lecture the next day, but no one was impressed. Those who were present were comparing the two talks and said: "In comparison to yesterday's talk, today's talk is like a person who is merely making faces."

Commotion In Jaudhpūr And Mumbai

After relating these incidents, Hadrat Wālā said: "All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā*, although I had the occasion to deliver lectures before many strong opponents, I never faced any unpleasant episode nor was I defamed anywhere. That is, defamation which is normally considered to be defamation. I went to different places and had to encounter people holding various beliefs. But I never concealed my views and my creed from anyone. Allāh *taʿālā* provided me with honour and comfort wherever I went. There were just two occasions which caused

anxiety, but did not reach the level of distress. Once in Jaudhpūr and another time in Mumbai; (these are related further on) and that too due to misunderstanding because in most places where the opponents are in the majority, I happen to be their guests. They gladly insist on me to be their guest, and I would never say or do anything which caused ill-feeling."

There are many opponents in Mumbai, but there too, the people insisted that I must deliver a talk. I delivered a frank and open talk, and wherever I went, I intermingled freely with all types of people. I was very open with everyone, both in privacy and in public. Some friends in Bareilly had warned me for not being on my guard. They said that there were many opponents there, and I should make arrangements for my security. I should not move around freely everywhere. I replied: "These are all baseless suspicions.

لَنْ يُّصِيْبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُوْنَ

Nothing except what Allāh decreed for us will afflict us. He is our Master. Those who place their trust ought to place it solely in Allāh.

Nothing can happen without Allāh's decree. If Allāh willed for something to happen, then even a thousand safety measures will not avail."

An Incident In Jaudhpūr

The distress which was experienced in Jaudhpūr and Mumbai is now related. The first incident which took place in Jaudhpūr is in Hadrat Wālā's own words.

A friend from Thānah Bhawan requested me to go to Jaudhpūr. I went there with Maulānā (Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh*). Acting under the requests of people, I delivered several lectures there. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, there was a lot of benefit from these talks and they created some softness and good impressions in the minds of the bid'atīs. At the end of each talk, an announcement for the time and venue for the next talk would be made. This was done at the request of the people. At the end of my talk on one of those nights, an announcement was made that I would be delivering a talk in a certain place, but no request had been received by the people of that area for me to go and deliver a talk there. It was known to be filled with mischief makers and obstinate people. The

people felt that the next day being a Friday, and since the residents of that area normally gather for the Friday s̲alāh, it will be a good opportunity to get the truth across to them. But the first impediment was that the majority of the residents were fanatical and zealous bidʿatīs. Secondly, they had a particular grievance with my friend [who had accompanied me from Thānah Bhawan] since a long time. The cause of this grievance was two-fold: on one hand, the residents' thinking was warped, and on the other hand, my friend was very sharp-tongued.

They were offended by the announcement and felt that this measure was adopted in order to put them to shame. So they resolved not to allow this talk to proceed.

Based on the circumstances, my friend too perceived some danger. He made a request to the magistrate who was from Galautī and held sound beliefs to organize a police force at the exact time of the lecture so that there is no untoward incident. The request was accepted, and an inspector with a few youngsters were instructed to be present.

We were informed of this at the exact time when we were making preparations to leave for the jumuʿah s̲alāh. Based on my temperament and disposition, I felt I should not go to such a volatile place. I removed all thoughts about delivering a lecture from my heart and expressed my view to those who were present. My friend said: "These are all baseless stories. The person who related this to you is cowardly and spineless. He becomes scared like this everywhere. We should most certainly go. Maulānā [Khalīl Ah̲mad Sahāranpūrī] said: "Even if it is true, we should not bother about such matters for the sake of conveying the truth."

I did not really give any regard to my friend's opinion because I felt he had some other worldly motive. But I remained silent when Maulānā spoke out. Although I still felt we should not go, I agreed for two reasons. (1) The basis for his opinion was Dīn even though it is an individual judgement which does not have to be accepted. At the same time, it is not impermissible. (2) If Maulānā is prepared to go, who am I to try and save my life?

The entire assembly reached there but found the situation to be completely different. No one greeted us, no one spoke to us; so where will they even ask us to lead them in the s̲alāh!? When the s̲alāh was completed, our friends announced that a

talk will be delivered. A local resident shouted in a loud voice that no talk will be delivered. This resulted in shouting and counter-shouting from both sides. I cannot even describe the clamour which ensued. Everyone forgot about the Sunnah salāhs of jumu'ah and they got engrossed in this issue. Maulānā and I began performing the Sunnah salāh in one corner. But Maulānā was at peace with himself while I was worried about the outcome. There was no sign of the police. One person eventually went and sat down on the pulpit. He thought that if he was sitting there, no one will be able to deliver a talk. The extent of the people's ignorance can be gauged from this.

One Khān Sāhib who was our supporter was also of the same temperament. He took a dagger and attacked the one who was sitting on the pulpit. Another Khān Sāhib of Taunk who was a calm and collected person was present there. He held the hand of the attacker from behind and stopped him, saying: "We will all get caught up in this fight." He became angry and left the gathering. In the meantime, the clamour and noise continued unabated.

After I completed my salāh, I realized that all this anger was based on the possibility that a lecture will be given. So I called the ringleader and seated him next to me. It was a boon that he came and sat down. He then said in an angry tone: "Say whatever you have to say." I said: "Do you suspect that a talk will be delivered? Now listen: I am the speaker and my speech is not so cheap that I will force someone into listening. I deliver a talk after winning everyone over to me. Seeing the present situation here, there is no way I will deliver a talk. You can be rest assured, I will certainly not speak here. In fact, if all the residents of this place request me to speak, I will not speak. I do not want you people to fight. The announcement which was made was done without consulting me. In fact, it was made against my wishes."

The man cooled down immediately and everyone fell silent. Much later, someone informed me that he said: "There is nothing wrong with these people [referring to us]. We ought to place their shoes on our heads. This entire commotion was caused by the person who made the announcement on his own accord."

I also heard that the people said: “We had no objection to the lecture being delivered. What we could not accept was the forceful manner in which everything was arranged. Had we been informed directly, we would have presented ourselves personally and made a request for the lecture to be delivered. We would have then laid out carpets, and made arrangements for ice and drinks for the guests. But they humiliated us by handling the affair in the manner in which they did.”

We left the musjid when the commotion subsided. On the way, we met the inspector with the guards. They said: “Come, you may deliver your talk now.” I said: “Glory to Allāh! You arrived so late!? Our blood was almost shed here. Why have you come now? The talk cannot be delivered now. There was no talk, it was a mere play. As the saying goes:

Of what benefit is your arrival after my departure!?

Maulānā [Khalīl Ahmad Sahāranpūrī] was saying: “Look at the joy in the discomfort which is experienced in the path of the truth.”

An Incident In Mumbai

The incident in Jaudhpūr was quoted above. I requested Hadrat Wālā to describe the incident which took place in Mumbai. He fulfilled my request by penning it down. I am quoting it verbatim.

When my junior wife was returning from hajj, I was informed by telegram to come to Mumbai. A chief whose wife was also returning from hajj accompanied me to Mumbai. Arrangements were made for me to stay over at the house of Hakīm Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib, but he was not present at the time. Another resident of Mumbai affectionately requested me to stay at his house. I accepted his invitation.

When we went to the harbour, we saw that the ship had arrived but because it was already late in the evening, the passengers were not permitted to disembark. I returned to the house to spend the night there. I performed the maghrib salāh in the local musjid. There was to be a debate during those days, and posters were stuck everywhere announcing this debate. Some people from out of Mumbai were expected to attend this debate. Some mischief makers saw me and

assumed that I too had come for the debate. The way of mischief makers has always been as mentioned in this couplet:

> When an oppressor can find no proof, he gets ready
> to resort to violence.

In line with the above principle, an armed group of people came to the house in which I was staying after ʿishā. They broke the lantern and attacked us violently. A worker of the chief who had accompanied me repulsed the attack. There was a veranda going out towards the street. It was quite dark there, so I went away into the veranda. The owner of the house also came and called out for the police. The mischief makers fled and Allāh *taʿālā* protected us all. Later on we learnt that the mischief makers had assumed that we had come to take part in the debate.

The next morning, some friends informed the commissioner of police of what transpired. He said: "The one who was attacked [referring to myself], will have to remain behind. If he agrees, I will make arrangements to apprehend the mischief makers." I was disinclined to this for two reasons: (1) I had to convey the returning h̲ājīs quickly to their homes. (2) The action of the mischief makers was not intentional. Like an unintentional murder, it was not eligible for retribution. Moreover, arrests and apprehensions of this nature were against the ways of our pious elders. However, what I did do was that I did not stay in that same house. Instead, we all proceeded to the house of H̲akīm Muh̲ammad Saʿīd S̲āh̲ib. Furthermore, it would have been easier to meet all the h̲ājīs there. We got them to disembark and housed them in H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib's house. I walked about freely in public for the next few days which we remained in Mumbai. There was no specific danger because the mischief makers had been mistaken about me. I then returned safe and sound to my hometown. This incident was related most incorrectly, and people were even told that I had been killed. I received letters from friends wanting to establish the truth. They were relieved when they realized I was alive.

In short, through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, no one was offended or angered by any of my actions during my journeys. These two incidents (in Jaudhpūr and Mumbai) were caused by others. Here too Allāh *taʿālā* protected me from their ill effects.

A Talk Must Be Based On Sincerity And Necessity

Every talk of Hadrat Wālā was based on sincerity and necessity. The people of Jaudhpūr generally refer to Deobandīs as Wahhābīs. This is why one of Hadrat Wālā's well-wishers of Jaudhpūr suggested he speak on the merits of Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Wālā blankly refused because it would mean that he is speaking on this topic for his own advantage, viz. people may refer to him as a Hanafī [and not a Wahhābī]. Whereas a talk ought to be delivered for the benefit and advantage of the audience. Similarly, a large gathering was organized in Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband. Some of the elders there said: "The merits of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* should be spoken about so that the suspicions of those who think we are Wahhābīs will be cleared. Furthermore, this is an excellent opportunity because people from all walks of life are present."

Hadrat Wālā replied respectfully: "This will need narrations and I do not have them in my mind at the moment." So they said: "If any narrations come to your mind when you are speaking, you must shed some light on them. If not, you do not have to." Since Hadrat Wālā was given a choice by the elders, he spoke on the topic of love for the world. There was a real need to speak on this subject because most people were immersed in this evil. Benefit to the general masses demanded that he speak on this subject, whereas speaking on the other subject which he was requested would have been to the benefit and advantage of his own group. That is, to save them from defamation. Obviously , the general good takes precedence over a specific benefit.

There was another point which prompted Hadrat Wālā to speak on this subject, viz. he had fallen extremely ill shortly before this gathering to the extent that there was no hope of attending. While in this sick condition, Hadrat Wālā dreamt that he was delivering a lecture in this gathering, and he was speaking on this Hadīth:

حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا رَأْسُ كُلِّ خَطِيْئَةٍ

Love for this world is the cause of every evil.

Consequently, Hadrat Wālā recovered beyond all expectations, gained sufficient strength, and spoke on the above Hadīth. In

short, every talk of Hadrat Wālā was based on sincerity and necessity. This was the reason why he received unseen help, and the audience used to be most impressed and derived tremendous benefit. It is a commonly accepted fact that Hadrat Wālā's talks, lectures and statements are in line with the condition and circumstances of his audience. His talks seemed to embody the following couplet:

> O you whose visit is an answer to every question! When we meet you, every complexity is solved without any difficulty.

In fact, most of the seekers thought that Hadrat Wālā received an exposition. But Hadrat Wālā takes an oath and denies it. He explains the reason: "Allāh *taʿālā* knows the condition of every person's heart. He places in my heart the subject matter which is appropriate to what is in the audience's heart, and conveys it through my tongue. This brings relief and satisfaction to the audience."

The Author's Own Experience

I recall my own experience. Hadrat Wālā was speaking about whisperings in a talk which he delivered in Allāhābād. He was saying that Satan casts whisperings into the heart from above; they are not born from the heart. This is similar to crops which are produced on the field, brought from there and stored in one's house. While Hadrat Wālā was speaking in this line, the thought occurred to me that it really seems as if whisperings are born in the heart. Hadrat Wālā immediately said: "Although it seems as if whisperings are embedded in the heart, this is not the case. Whatever we perceive in the heart is merely a reflection. Like when a fly is sitting on a mirror, it seems to be inside the mirror whereas it is merely its reflection. It is sitting on the mirror." I was fully satisfied when I heard this.

A Unique Incident

I recall another incident related to the fact that Hadrat Wālā's talks and lectures were based on absolute sincerity. A soon-to-be-delivered talk of Hadrat Wālā was advertised in Allāhābād. A large crowd of people assembled enthusiastically, but Maulānā Sulaymān Sāhib Phulwārī sought permission from Hadrat Wālā to say a few words first. But his talk became quite detailed and prolonged. When he completed, Hadrat Wālā refused to speak,

despite the audience’s insistence. He said: “The Maulānā has mentioned all the necessary points, what is the need for me to say anything further? Now that you are insisting on me to speak, it means that I must search for and speak on themes which were left out by Maulānā, and to show that I am better than him. It would appear like a competition. So I am not going to say anything further.”

Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of sincerity and consideration for other ‘ulamā’! This incident was related to me by Shaykh Muhammad ‘Umar Sāhib Allāhābādī who is the special attendant of Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Allāhābādī.

Appealing Lectures To Opponents

When occasions demanded it, Hadrat Wālā spoke on issues and matters which were severely contested, and on which there were divergent views. The beauty of such talks was that he did not hesitate in expressing and establishing the truth, and left no stone unturned in disproving falsehood. At the same time, he did not insult anyone nor did he ever cast aside civility. He himself says: “I will make them eat the bitter gourd but after making it delicious with sweet ingredients. I will give them a sugar coated pill so that instead of it getting stuck in the throat, it will go down easily.” I often saw Hadrat Wālā speaking very frankly to modernists but in a very appealing tone, causing them to listen with a smile and to benefit from what he was saying.

A Lecture At Mu’tamar al-Ansār

An assembly was hosted by Mu’tamar al-Ansār in Meerut. A strict and stern lecturer openly criticized those who studied English and went to the extent of labelling them as accursed people. They were quite displeased by his address. Hadrat Wālā addressed the same crowd the next day. He started with the following prelude: “The Maulānā who addressed you yesterday did not have enough time so he spoke in concise terms. Since his topic is important, I will provide you with its details today.” After explaining and expounding on the atheistic beliefs of modernists in some detail, he said to them: “I now ask you to decide for yourselves; if a person holds such beliefs and does these actions, what decision will you pass on him in the light of the pure Sharī‘ah?”

In short, let alone saying what the Maulānā had said yesterday, Hadrat Wālā said even more things against them. But the difference was that he conveyed his theme in a subtle and appealing manner without offending them in the least. In fact, they practically acknowledged that they were certainly as detailed by him. Hadrat Wālā said whatever he wanted to say, but without using a single offensive word. He followed this with an extremely simple and logical course of action which they must follow in order to remove their misgivings and set right their beliefs. He said to them: "If you really want to reform your ways, you must go to a person whom you consider to be an erudite scholar and spend at least forty days with him as a guest. But you must remain silent during this entire period. Yes, you may note all your misgivings and doubts and give it to him. You must then listen to whatever he says periodically in his talks and assemblies without asking any questions or making any objections. After listening to these talks, you must ponder and reflect over them in privacy. I can make a promise in Allāh's name, in fact, I can claim that if you follow this procedure – inshā Allāh – all your doubts and misgivings will be removed and at least, your beliefs will be rectified. Once your beliefs are put in order – inshā Allāh – your actions will gradually come right."

When they heard this, they began discussing among themselves and said: "This man is claiming that we must experience this ourselves. There is no way we can refute him as long we do not experience it as he says. The fact of the matter is that our hearts are telling us that it will happen exactly as he claims. We cannot refute him without experiencing it first hand."

Research Acumen

A special assembly was held in Lahore to which many senior 'ulamā' were invited. The issue of permissibility and non-permissibility of usury [interest] was discussed. When Hadrat Wālā reached the assembly, Maulānā Sulaymān Sāhib Phulwārī addressed the 'ulamā' and said without hesitation: "The truth will now be made clear, and the milk will be separated from the water."

He was certainly correct because this was exactly the nature of Hadrat Wālā's research and investigation.

During his stay in Kānpūr, Hadrat Wālā noticed people of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah attending the mourning assemblies of the Shīʿah and becoming accustomed to listening to the stories on the martyrdom of Hadrat Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. So Hadrat Wālā began delivering a series of lectures on the first ten days of Muharram wherein he described the stories surrounding the demise of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Four Caliphs. He did this so that there is no imitation of the Shīʿah assemblies.

The people's interest increased to such an extent that the Shīʿah assemblies became empty and the people began attending Hadrat Wālā's talks. Not only the Sunnīs, even the Shīʿahs came in large numbers and were very impressed. They cried profusely even when they heard about the circumstances surrounding the demise of the first three Caliphs. But when it came to describing the martyrdom of Hadrat Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Hadrat Wālā used so simple and straightforward words and sentences that although his martyrdom was a painful incident, not a single tear was shed. The people were astonished. Hadrat Wālā used to refute the beliefs of the Shīʿah in the course of these lectures but in a subtle manner without insulting them. They used to come enthusiastically to listen to him, but after the lectures, they would say: "The Maulānā was taunting us."

On one occasion he spoke about the responsibilities and difficulties of the Caliphate. He said: "The Shīʿahs ought to be grateful to the first three Caliphs because they allowed Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* to rest for twenty four years. Or else, instead of having to face problems for six years, he would have had to face them for thirty years. After all, he was alive from the beginning of the Caliphate for the next thirty years, and had to be Caliph for only six of those years." After listening to Hadrat Wālā's talks and lectures of this nature, many Shīʿahs became Sunnīs or were more and more attracted to the Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah.

Lectures On The Subject of Salāh

Also during his stay in Kānpūr, Hadrat Wālā delivered many major lectures. There were times when he spoke for 6-7 hours while standing. Once, he delivered talks for two months only on the subject of salāh. He went to each district and area and spoke on salāh. Subsequently, so large numbers of people

began performing salāh that there was no place in the masājid. People became so enthusiastic about salāh that even the rickshaw-pullers would constantly ask their passengers the time so that they could go and perform their salāh. The lectures of those days contained very intricate and complex academic issues which were conveyed in a very articulate manner and were not difficult to understand.

Themes, Words And Sentence Constructions

Maulānā Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib relates: "I personally heard him delivering a talk on one particular Hadīth at least fifty times, but his subject matter was never repeated. Unfortunately, the practice of penning his talks had not been initiated at that time or else that too would have been a very valuable treasure."

Some of Hadrat Wālā's lectures are simple and straightforward while others are intricate. Both are unique and effective. They are unparalleled as regards the choice of words and the meanings which they conveyed. They are embodiments of the following couplet:

> The splendour of its beauty refreshes the heart and soul. Those who are interested in the outward are refreshed with its colour, and those who are interested in the internal are refreshed with its fragrance.

We have always noticed all types of people attending Hadrat Wālā's talks and sitting and listening to him for several hours with absolute enthusiasm. Many senior linguists used to attend as well. I heard a senior poet and student of Ghālib saying in astonishment: "I do not know where Maulānā finds these words." On hearing Hadrat Wālā's printed lectures, an old senior poet said to me: "Maulānā creates the joy of poetry in his prose. It is as if he is saying poetry but in the form of prose." On seeing Hadrat Wālā's comprehensive and concise words and expressions, a person was taught the art of shorthand so that his lectures may be penned verbatim. Unfortunately, the person was not successful in this regard.

A Chain Of The Spiritual Masters

A pious and intelligent personality presents an excellent picture of Hadrat Wālā's talks. He says: "Hadrat's lecture is a chain of the spiritual masters."

Hadrat Wālā's lectures were in total accordance with the following instruction of Allāh *taʿālā*:

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُ

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and kind admonition. Argue with them in a way that is best.[1]

Hadrat Wālā's series of lectures titled *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat* contain these three themes, viz. lectures of admonition, writings of wisdom and balanced argumentation. These are the three ways of general propagation. One is to deliver a lecture in the normal sense of the word. The other is through direct statements. The third is through removing doubts and providing answers to objections.

Latter-Life Lectures

Hadrat Wālā has virtually given up delivering lectures. If he ever has such an occasion, he has a book before him, looks in it periodically and continues with his talk in this way. He says: "The desire to deliver lectures is no longer present because – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – I have spoken about whatever was necessary. My extreme physical weakness is a further obstacle."

He also says: "My heart recoils from lengthy talks. Now I like to confine myself to a specific address according to the need. In reality, a specific address is more beneficial because it contains all the essential points."

This happens to most of the pious personalities towards the end of their lives. Many examples of this are found in the lives of our past elders. Hadrat Wālā writes in his article, *Amthāl al-Aqwāl wa al-Ahwāl li Afādil ar –Rijāl* (examples of statements and conditions of erudite personalities) under the subject of remaining silent when there is no need to speak. He quotes a statement of Hadrat Abū Hamzah Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*:

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[1] Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

روي أنه كان حسن الكلام، فهتف به هاتف: تكلمت فأحسنت، بقي عليك أن تسكت فتحسن، فما تكلم بعد ذلك حتى مات.

It is said that he was an excellent speaker. An unseen caller called out to him saying: "You have done very well in speaking. It is now time for you to excel in remaining silent." Subsequently, he stopped speaking until his death.

Hadrat Wālā delivered lectures and talks by the thousands. Unfortunately, all were not penned. Those which have been printed to date number 311. Many more are in manuscript form. Bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā has virtually stopped delivering lectures, there is a dire need to hasten in getting the manuscripts ready for print. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire the writers.

TRAVELS

Reasons

Hadrat Wālā was naturally disposed to solitude and was therefore discomforted by crowds. In addition to travels causing impediments in his daily spiritual practices, the crowds of people who were desirous of meeting him caused barriers to his solitude. This is why he was always inclined to remaining at home and averse to travelling. However, he undertook many near and distant journeys for the fulfilment of Sharʿī needs, e.g. performing hajj, conveying the injunctions of Islam, rectification of the Muslim community, visiting the sick and so on. He bore physical and spiritual fatigue and every other type of inconvenience for these purposes. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the Muslim community benefited tremendously from his journeys. Muslims of different regions and lands who could not present themselves before him either because of distance or other reasons were now honoured by the visit of a genuine inheritor of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and a true example of the righteous servants of the past. They were able to derive benefit from his useful statements and lectures, obtain blessings from his company and learn from his perfect example.

Unique Features

In addition to the above-mentioned benefits, an added benefit of his journeys was that those who accompanied him (and a large number of people accompanied him to every place he went to) and other people in general learnt the injunctions and etiquette of travelling. This is because Hadrat Wālā never travelled in a meaningless way as is the general trend. Instead, he adhered strictly to the injunctions of the Sharīʿah and the principles of good social conduct at every point of the journey, and ensured that his companions and those who came to meet him also adhered strictly. This could have only been the distinguishing feature of a Hakīm al-Ummah and Mujaddid al-Millah. After all, who else would pay attention to such intricate matters of piety in these times of liberalism and freedom especially when the difficulties of travelling are added to the equation!

It is not possible to write details about the countless admonitory stories and rectifications in this concise work. Hadrat Wālā's travelogue which has been printed and his *Husn al-ʿAzīz* are filled with such stories and should be studied for this purpose.

Requests

Hadrat Wālā used to receive so many requests from far and distant places that if he were to accept just 10% of them, he would not have the opportunity of living in his hometown for a single day of the year. He used to agree to undertake a journey only after a lot of persistence, on very special occasions, and after many essential conditions and prerequisites were fulfilled.

Preconditions For The Acceptance of a Request

For example, the Nawāb Sāhib of Dhaka, Salīmullāh Khān Sāhib Marhūm, was extremely desirous for Hadrat Wālā to come to Dhaka and persisted in this regard. Hadrat Wālā accepted provided the following preconditions were fulfilled:

1. He must not be given any cash or non-cash gift.
2. Full arrangements for his stay must be made in a place which is completely separate from the Nawāb's mansion so that the Muslim masses may come to meet him without restriction.
3. A special time must be set aside for himself and the Nawāb where there must be no third person so that the two can discuss and benefit from each other without any hindrance or formalities.
4. He must not be requested to deliver a lecture on any specific topic.

Since the Nawāb Sāhib's yearning to meet Hadrat Wālā was overpowering and he was of very sound disposition, he accepted all the preconditions.

The Nawāb Sāhib intended receiving Hadrat Wālā as he would a viceroy. For example, a velvet carpet on the platform, flags along the road, and so forth. When Hadrat Wālā was informed of this by the Nawāb Sāhib's uncle, he stopped him by saying that it was against the Sharīʿah. The Nawāb Sāhib then sought permission to receive him by having a large crowd of people to welcome him, including the workers of the state and other

senior and prominent people of the city. Hadrat Wālā wrote by saying: “This is against my temperament.” Despite this, a very large unorganized crowd assembled at the station. The Nawāb Sāhib seated Hadrat Wālā in his special conveyance while he sat in another conveyance. When Hadrat Wālā asked him to sit with him, he excused himself and said to the people that he felt it disrespectful to sit with Hadrat Wālā.

He did not even sit with Hadrat Wālā for the meals because he felt it disrespectful. He made his wives cook special and new types of dishes, and would personally place the platters and plates before Hadrat Wālā. By virtue of the mutual affinity between the two and the fact that he had softened to Hadrat Wālā, he would say things like: “Look! This has been cooked by my young wife especially for you. Do you recognize what it is?” Hadrat Wālā would reply jokingly: “Is it a prerequisite to recognize what you are eating? Its taste is not dependent on recognizing it. The moment it is eaten, its taste will be known and the purpose fulfilled. But if you feel it is a prerequisite to recognize the food, then I have no need for such food. Furthermore, we are town dwellers, what do we know about the foods of the Nawābs?!” The Nawāb Sāhib would then identify each item and explain how it was prepared.

Hadrat Wālā regularly speaks highly about the Nawāb Sāhib’s character and sound disposition. He relates many entertaining incidents about his intelligence, humility and religiosity. He even requested Hadrat Wālā to accept his bayʿah but he refused. Hadrat Wālā constantly says: “There is no benefit in accepting the bayʿah of people whom you have to always take into consideration. We must accept a person as a murīd only if – when there is a need of rectification – we can tell him that he is unworthy, or at least, that his action is unworthy.” Although Hadrat Wālā refused, whenever he wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā, he would conclude with the words: “Your murīd, Salīmullāh.” He had a lot of confidence and faith in Hadrat Wālā. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer him with the highest stages in Jannatul Firdaus. Āmīn.

Nature Of His Journeys

Hadrat Wālā had a natural aversion to travelling. However, since Allāh *taʿālā* had sent him into this world as His proof – a fact which Hadrat Wālā himself perceived – when requests to come and deliver lectures went beyond the limits, he was

forced to accept. He would then undertake lengthy journeys. If he had to leave on one journey, he would receive a string of requests from various places and several months would pass in travelling. In short, divine will decreed that lengthy journeys be undertaken by him, the injunctions of Islam be conveyed, and Allāh's evidence against the creation be established. We were on a journey on one occasion when I asked Hadrat Wālā something about travelling. He replied by quoting the following couplet with full emotion:

> My friend has thread a needle in my neck, and now takes me wherever he wants.

First And Last Journey

After completing his studies, Hadrat Wālā's first journey was in Safar 1301 A.H. when he went to Kānpūr as a teacher. According to Maulānā ʿAbd al-Karīm Gamthalwī, Hadrat Wālā's last journey was probably in Shawwāl 1343 A.H. to Gangoh. By the grace and help of Allāh *taʿālā*, during this period, no region of India was not honoured by Hadrat Wālā's blessed feet, and where he did not convey the teachings of Islam and thereby established Allāh's evidence on earth. The following are some of the places to which he travelled: Karachi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Rangoon, Dhaka, Shamla, Gujarat, Mārwār, Bhāwalpūr, Hyderabad Decca, Sindh, Gorukpūr, Aʿzam Garh, Ghāzīpūr and Benares.

Giving Up Travelling

After this period, Hadrat Wālā's natural temperament which he had kept subdued out of necessity made its appearance, and he gave up travelling altogether. It was his wish since a long time to give up his travels. In fact, he had seven excuses for not travelling printed but this announcement did not have any effect on those who were desirous of inviting him. These excuses were not so overriding so as to deter the people. Yes, his journeys certainly decreased but they could not be stopped completely. Hadrat Wālā was constantly thinking about a reason which would silence all the requests but he could not come up with one.

Eventually, when Allāh *taʿālā* Himself willed for Hadrat Wālā to settle down in one place permanently – as is the case with most pious personalities towards the latter part of their lives,

especially those who are qutbs – Hadrat Wālā received an excuse from the unseen which, by Allāh's grace, was not too discomforting to him, but most sensible and acceptable to others. Hadrat Wālā had been suffering from a hernia for many years, but it never caused him any pain or discomfort. But now it suddenly became very discomforting. When the pain did not stop, the thought came into his heart to have it raised. This was done and it was raised very easily although it had been protruding for so many years. The discomfort disappeared immediately. Subsequently, whenever it was raised, he felt comfort; and when it was allowed to protrude, the pain would return. It became necessary to use a spring. But it would move from its place if he sneezed, coughed or moved suddenly. He would have to lie down and raise the hernia once again. This excuse was a wonderful opportunity for Hadrat Wālā. He said: "How can I travel because if this were to happen while I was travelling, I would have to lie down before everyone and put the hernia back in place. My modesty can never allow me to do this in public." He had this excuse printed as well. A copy of it is quoted here:

> Most of my associates are aware that I am suffering from a hernia for over thirty years. As long as there was enough strength in my body, the discomfort was less. But now my strength has decreased. With the passing of thirty years, my condition has deteriorated to the extent that although I have a hard spring permanently attached, when I cough, get up suddenly, sneeze, speak aloud, speak for long periods of time, remain standing for a long time or walk for a long distance; my hernia protrudes. There are times when it protrudes several times in a single hour. If it is not put right immediately, the pain becomes unbearable. Sometimes when it protrudes, the veins of my stomach and chest contract, causing severe pain. In order to put the spring back in place, I have to be in a private place, lie down, remove my clothes, remove the spring, press the hernia back in place with my hands, and put the spring back in place. Obviously, bearing in mind this entire condition and situation, it is not possible for me to undertake any journey. The doctors have informed me that it is harmful for me to walk around too

> much and even stand for lengthy periods. I myself have experienced these actions to be harmful. Over three years have passed since I did not undertake any short or distant journey. In fact, even if a close relative passed away in another district [of Thānah Bhawan], I sent a note of consolation, but did not attend personally.
>
> Since the cause of this is the splitting of the omentum, and it is generally not possible to reattach it, there is no hope for the removal of this obstacle. Many Indian, Bengali and European doctors concur that this condition cannot be treated without an operation. They also concur that an operation at this age is dangerous.
>
> This entire situation makes me permanently excused from undertaking any journey. Some of my associates who have not seen my condition continue to invite me to their functions. I am publishing this announcement for their information so that they will not make such requests after bearing in mind my strong excuse.
>
> Was salām
> Ashraf ʿAlī
> Thānah Bhawan
> 10 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1337 A.H.

Despite this announcement, some people continued imposing on Hadrat Wālā to come to them. But because he had made a firm decision of not travelling any more, he did not accede to any request. He has stopped travelling completely for the last ten years. Being the qutb of the time, he is now permanently based in his hometown and continues to shower Allāh's creation with his bestowals and blessings – far more than what he was doing previously.

Preparation For A Journey

Before embarking on a journey, Hadrat Wālā would ponder over the distance, purpose and period. He would then make preparations and adhere strictly to his time table throughout the journey. He would spend several days and nights before his departure in organizing all necessary matters for the entire

extent of his journey so that no task is left unfinished and no necessity is left out at the exact time of departure.

Attention To Luggage In The Course Of The Journey

Hadrat Wālā used to pay particular attention to his luggage. The moment he got off at a station, before he can shake hands and greet, he would count all the luggage and remain concerned about it until he handed over its responsibility to a specific person. He would not allow several persons to carry the luggage in a haphazard manner. Just one or two persons were put in charge. On reaching the place where he is to stay, he will first take stock of all the luggage and stack it in place. He would ask for directions to the toilet from before hand so that when the need arose, he did not experience any inconvenience – especially at night. He used to prepared long before the expected time of arrival of his conveyance. If there was a delay in the arrival of the conveyance, he would start walking. People would then hasten to obtain a conveyance and seat Hadrat Wālā along the way. This was the wisdom behind walking.

Contact With Home

Hadrat Wālā would make arrangements for posting letters home in accordance with the number of days he planned to be away. He would send letters from each of the places to which he went so that there was no cause for any worry or concern at home. Furthermore, the guests who arrived in his presence would also know his whereabouts. He would go to the extent of continuing his task of writing in a moving train. If there was a need, he would take an attendant and scribe for recording his lectures.

Simplicity

He was so simple that he did not bother about which class he sat in. He would very often say: "The enjoyment and comfort which one experiences in the third class cannot be experienced in the upper classes. The people of the third class show consideration to us, while those in the upper classes are immersed in their conceited ways, where will they show any consideration to us!? In fact, we will have to be on our guard in their presence; we will not be able to laugh and talk informally."

Hadrat Wālā was travelling from Sahāranpūr to Rāmpūr where there was to be a debate between the Qādiyānīs and the 'ulamā' who were on truth. Hadrat Wālā attended merely out of consideration for our people and to be with Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib and other 'ulamā'. They had purchased second class tickets but when they saw an empty coach, they all went in. Someone informed them that it was a third class coach. Hadrat Wālā said: "Our purpose is to be comfortable, and we found this empty coach. What better comfort can we find than getting a seat near the entrance?" So they continued their journey in this coach. The Nawāb Sāhib of Dhaka had sent sufficient money for them to travel in an upper class, but by travelling in the third class, he saved the money, sent it back home and, as was his norm, intended to return it to the Nawāb Sāhib. However, he also had to consider the respect of the Nawāb Sāhib. So he purchased tin-roofing for the musjid with the saved amount of money, had a shelter constructed for the ablution place of the musjid, and informed the Nawāb Sāhib. It would have been disrespectful to return the money to the Nawāb Sāhib, and at the same time, it was against his principles to use it for himself.

Strict Adherence To A Time Table

Hadrat Wālā used to adhere strictly to the time table which was drawn up for the purpose of his journey. He was travelling from Kānpūr to Thānah Bhawan on one occasion. One of his attendants insisted they stop over in Khaurjah for his sake. Hadrat Wālā said: "The people of Muzaffar Nagar have already been informed about the arrival of our train. If we do not reach on time, they will become extremely worried. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, I have never reached a place at a time which I did not promise." The attendant said: "I can send a telegram." Hadrat Wālā replied: "No. It will still cause a disruption because they would have probably hired a conveyance for us. We do not know if the hired person will wait or not, or whether they will be able to hire another conveyance or not. All this will certainly cause complications. Furthermore, there is always disappointment and frustration when a person reaches later than expected. Had you told me before I wrote a letter to them, it would have been possible for us to stop."

Luggage

Hadrat Wālā would only carry essential items and would have them ready one day before departure so that he does not encounter any difficulty at the time of departure or does not forget an essential item. He would fix the price with the porters before hand because it is not permissible to compel them to accept the price stipulated by the railways. If there was the slightest possibility of the luggage being overweight, he would have it weighed immediately and pay for the extra luggage.

Caution In Paying For Luggage

Hadrat Wālā was travelling from Sahāranpūr to Kānpūr and he had some sugar-cane with him. He wanted to have it weighed at the station so that he could pay for the additional weight, but no one weighed it. Even the non-Muslim railway worker trusted him and said: "Take it as it is, there is no need for you to weigh it. I will inform the guard." Hadrat Wālā asked: "To which point will this guard be going?" He replied: "His duty is up to Ghāzī Ābād." He asked: "What will happen after Ghāzī Ābād?" The man said: "The guard will inform the next guard." Hadrat Wālā asked: "What will happen after that?" The man replied: "He will convey you to Kānpūr, and your journey ends there." Hadrat Wālā said: "No. The journey does not end there. After it is another journey to the Hereafter. What arrangements will you make for that journey?" All those who were present fell silent and were most impressed by Hadrat Wālā. Many other highly educated Hindus were standing nearby and they began speaking among themselves: "Are there still such faithful servants of God who are so cautious and fear Him so much!?"

The railway workers of the nearby towns and villages had so much of trust in Hadrat Wālā's associates that whenever they saw any trustworthy looking person going to Thānah Bhawan, they would not stop him to weigh his luggage. They used to say with full confidence: "He is going to the Maulānā Sāhib of Thānah Bhawan. Those who are going there do not travel without first weighing their luggage."

Rectifying A Student On Payment Of A Fare

A student came to Thānah Bhawan to visit but Hadrat Wālā was leaving on a journey, so he met him on the station. Because there was very little time, the student informed the

guard and boarded the train without a ticket. He purchased a ticket at the next station, Nānauta. But when he went to give the guard the fare for Thānah Bhawan to Nānauta, the guard said: "You are a poor person. There is no need for you to pay for the ticket to this point." When the student came to Hadrat Wālā and informed him, he said: "The guard is an employee of the railway company, he does not own it. So the fare to this point has got to be paid by you. Now this is what you must do: Purchase a similarly priced ticket of this route and tear the ticket. In this way, the company will receive its money and you will absolve yourself of your duty to your fellow humans."

A Conversation With An Aryan Missionary

An Aryan missionary who knew English was sitting in the same coach. He said: "Sir, I would like to express something which crossed my heart. The truth is that when he came and informed you that the guard pardoned him for the fare to this point, I felt happy because a poor person has benefited. But after listening to what you said, I realized that my joy was one of faithlessness."

Some other Hindus were with this Aryan. One of them said: "My heart is attracted to their words." Another said: "This is proof that they are on the truth. They are true people, this is why their words have an effect." A short while later, the Aryan missionary said to Hadrat Wālā: "Can I ask you a question?" He replied: "Certainly." The Aryan said: "There are two people; one is a Muslim and the other a non-Muslim. Both did a good deed with a good intention. Will the two receive the same reward or will there be a difference in it?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "This question is far below your intelligence and culture because you asked a question whose answer is already in your mind from beforehand." He asked: "How do you know that its answer is in my mind from beforehand?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "If all the preludes to the answer are in your mind, the answer too is in your mind. When the result of an essential is found, the presence of the essential is also essential." He asked: "How do you know that the preludes to the answer are in my mind?" Hadrat Wālā said: "Here, I will make you acknowledge that the preludes are in your mind."

"Don't you know that from among all the religions there can only be one correct one? And at the moment we are not discussing which religion is the correct one." He replied:

"Without doubt, there can only be one true religion." Hadrat Wālā said: "This is one prelude which was present in your mind from beforehand. I am now asking you a second question: Am I right in saying that a follower of a true religion is like a law abiding citizen of the state, and a follower of a false religion is like one who is rebelling against the state?" The Aryan agreed. Hadrat Wālā said: "This is the second prelude which you accepted. Am I right in saying that all the excellences of the rebellious one are disregarded solely because he is a rebel? Will he not be punished by the court despite being a man of many capabilities? And is that punishment irrational and unjust?" The Aryan agreed to all points. Hadrat Wālā said: "Bearing in mind that all three preludes are present in your mind from beforehand, the result of them is most certainly in your mind as well. And this is the answer to your question. In such a case, the clear meaning of your question is that I must be able to tell you straight in your face that you are an unbeliever. But our Sharīʿah does not permit us to unnecessarily address a person as an unbeliever." The Aryan replied happily: "I was really wanting you to hear you say this word to me [that is, you are an unbeliever]. There is joy in hearing this word from such a mouth as yours." Hadrat Wālā said: "It may be good for you, but it is most deplorable for me to utter such words."

In short, the Aryan was very pleased with Hadrat Wālā's cultured and sensible conversation. He asked Hadrat Wālā his name and where he lived. When Hadrat Wālā informed him, he said: "I come quite often to Thānah Bhawan to deliver lectures on the Aryan Society. I will certainly come to meet you the next time I come there."

Hadrat Wālā had to encounter all types of people in the course of his travels, so these small debates used to take place very often. Hadrat Wālā always concluded such debates with a few arguments.

A Professor's Silence

Maulwī Dhakā'ullāh, a professor in mathematics and a famous writer, met Hadrat Wālā in Delhi. He asked Hadrat Wālā: "Do you even develop any capabilities in your students in the madrasah?!" Hadrat Wālā replied: "First explain the meaning of capabilities to me and I will give you an answer." He fell silent when he heard this because he realized that if he were to give

an answer, it would be difficult to prove who can claim to a capable person. If he were to say anything further, it will result in an argument and it will be difficult for him to come out of the predicament.

Impressions Of Hindu Travellers

A Hindu who appeared to be a senior personality was sitting in the same coach with Hadrat Wālā. He asked with much admiration: "From your eyes I can guess that you are occupied in some task (referring to the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* and other spiritual exercises)."

On another occasion, Hadrat Wālā began moving from one coach to another under the advice of his companions because they felt that the next coach had more place and they would be able to sit comfortably. As he was proceeding, the Hindus who were seated in the present coach said with regret: "Oh! This place was filled with effulgence because of you, and now you are taking it away with you."

The Impression Of The Nawāb Of Rāmpūr

Many senior 'ulamā' attended the debate which was organized by the Nawāb of Rāmpūr against the Qādiyānīs. Hadrat Wālā also joined after his elders insisted on him to come. All the 'ulamā' also had a time to go once daily to the Nawāb Sāhib. Hadrat Wālā would also go, but he would sit at a distance with his eyes looking down and remaining silent. Later on, the Nawāb Sāhib asked one of his companions: "Who was that person sitting silently at a distance with his eyes downcast? He seems to be a powerful person because I can feel my heart attracted towards him." The companion knew Hadrat Wālā and personally conveyed the Nawāb Sāhib's impressions to him.

When Hadrat Wālā was about to depart from Rāmpūr, the Nawāb Sāhib wanted to give an extra amount of money for the fare. Hadrat Wālā sent a message to him saying: "The state does not have any Sharʿī right to spend more than necessary from the Bayt al-Māl."

Striking Appearance

Hadrat Wālā was delivering a talk in a major gathering in Deoband. A person, probably from the Sarhad[1] region, was sitting near me. In the course of the talk, he was saying this on several occasions: "O Maulwī! May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you with peace. I came from such a distant place solely to set eyes on you."

There are countless such stories which display how beloved Hadrat Wālā was in the sight of people. How much can I relate here? When he proceeded in a particular direction while on a journey, everyone will look up and follow him with their eyes irrespective of whether they were Muslims, Hindus, Englishmen, Parsees, righteous people or sinners.

On observing Hadrat Wālā's striking appearance, some people from Kabul said in their own unique Urdu: "Maulānā Sāhib! You seem to be from Kabul." Hadrat Wālā replied: "I myself am not from Kabul, but my forefathers were from there."

It is an undeniable observation that even in an assembly of thousands of people, Hadrat Wālā's regal face and luminous appearance would cause him to be the most visible and striking person in the entire gathering. One of my friends composed a poem in praise of Hadrat Wālā in his dream. When he woke up, he remembered the poem. I consider it to be divinely inspired because it applies to Hadrat Wālā to the letter. It reads as follows:

> When there is none to match you, a person is certainly left speechless. You have been selected from hundreds of thousands. This is how a selection ought to be.

A famous modern-educated philosopher wrote the following line of Hālī Marhūm in praise of Hadrat Wālā:

> There may be millions of people like you in the world, but there is none equal to you.

I conclude this section on the beauty and perfection of Hadrat Wālā with the couplet of Hadrat Amīr Khusro *rahimahullāh* and then return to the original subject.

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[1] The area bordering Pakistan and Afghanistan.

I travelled through all the lands of the world. I saw many beautiful people in the process but you are something else.

Concern For The Comfort Of The Host

No matter where Hadrat Wālā stayed, he never approved of imposing any burden on his host nor did he request for anything. In fact, he was not so happy with a very formal meal as he was with a simple and ordinary meal. It was the practice in Aʿzamgarh to invite a large number of people together with Hadrat Wālā. This was a big burden on the host. In order to put an end to this practice, he made a condition for the acceptance of an invitation: "I will come alone and I will only eat boiled rice and pulse because you people make rolled rotīs which are a bit hard and unsuitable for me."

Rectifying Un-Islamic Customs

During his journey to Bengal, he noticed that the local residents had the custom of coming to him and touching his feet. He put an end to this practice by first stopping them. If they persisted in touching his feet, he would respond by touching the person's feet. If the person felt ashamed and stopped him, Hadrat Wālā would say: "If this is a good practice, why are you stopping me? If it is a bad practice, why do you do it?" After doing this a few times, people learnt of his disapproval and gave up this baseless custom.

It was also a practice in Aʿzamgarh for a few people to walk in front and move away anyone who was coming from the opposite direction. Hadrat Wālā said: "The road does not belong to anyone. Everyone has an equal right to walk on it. Your action is against the Sharīʿah and you must give it up. You should never do this." This custom also came to an end.

Hadrat Wālā was walking past an English school. All the Hindu children and teachers stood up out of respect. On seeing this, he went into the school, met everyone in a very informal and jovial manner, and conversed with them. They were all pleased and astonished because it was the practice of the ʿulamā' of that place to abstain from even talking to the Hindus. And if anyone did not stand up out of respect for the ʿulamā', the latter would reprimand them.

Another practice was for a few people to run on either side of the palanquin in which Hadrat Wālā was seated. He prohibited them saying: "I am embarrassed by this." They said: "We do it out of love." He said: "Then why are you displaying it to me? Do not walk on either side, walk behind where I cannot see you." When Hadrat Wālā turned around to check after a little while, he saw no one. This showed that they were doing it to show Hadrat Wālā. What could those poor people do, after all no one of authority reprimanded them for such an action. Instead, they used to be pleased by it.

Rectification With Regard To Gifts

When Hadrat Wālā was departing from a certain place, the village headman gave 200 rupees to him after having made a collection from the villagers. He did not inform Hadrat Wālā that it had been collected from the villagers. Hadrat Wālā became suspicious because he did not think the headman could have given such a large amount all by himself; he must have made a collection from the people. So he asked him: "Is this solely from your side or did others join in?" He replied: "It was taken from others as well." Hadrat Wālā said: "A gift is given for the sake of love. If I do not know who gave it, how will I have love for them? You must therefore return all the money to the respective people. Thereafter, if anyone wants to give me, he must come personally and give me with his own hands so that I too can look at him and think of him as my benefactor and one who loves me." The headman offered the excuse: "But you are leaving now." Hadrat Wālā said: "I am going to a very nearby place where it will be easy for everyone to come. Anyone who is enthusiastic may come there and give me a gift." No one came to give him even a single rupee. It was merely a custom and nothing else. Hadrat Wālā learnt later on that the ʿulamā' who go to that place are highly offended when they are not pampered or when they are given very small sums of money as gifts.

While relating these incidents which took place in Aʿzamgarh, Hadrat Wālā said: "I was able to wipe out a few other customs of that place, but I did not succeed in wiping out one particular one. When an ʿālim arrives in any place, most of the people – even young children – come out at quite a distance to welcome him. They do the same when they bid him farewell." He adds: "The people of this area are very capable and religious. Even

the Western educated people have correct beliefs. It seems that they pursue Western education merely to earn a living."

Affection And Concern

Hadrat Wālā would travel to a place only if the people there persisted, and very few requests were honoured with acceptance. But if a sick person requested him to visit him, he would not refuse unless there was some special impediment. Hadrat Wālā's heart would melt on such occasions and quote the following couplet:

> If the weak are asking for you and do not have the strength to come to you, it will be most discourteous if you wrong them [by not going to them].

Many sick people had their wish of passing away in Hadrat Wālā's presence fulfilled. Quite often he would be delayed in visiting the person because of some reason. But this turned out to be a divine decree because the person would pass away in his presence and his heart-felt desire would be fulfilled.

There was an upright and knowledgeable chief in Bareilly who, during his final illness, was experiencing many whisperings of having an evil death. Hadrat Wālā immediately bore the hardships of travel and went to visit him. He gave him genuine words of consolation which caused all his whisperings to disappear and he departed from this world a smiling man.

It became absolutely clear to anyone who observed Hadrat Wālā with an open heart that the affection and concern which he had was rarely found in anyone else. It would make its appearance where there was a pressing need for it. Where there was a need for diplomacy and tact for the sake of rectification, then his diplomacy was in fact his affection. If he were to display affection in the latter case, then although it would appear to be affection, it would have been enmity in reality. A poet says:

> Harshness and softness combined are laudable traits. A surgeon cuts a vein and also repairs it.

Sometimes Hadrat Wālā would receive information about a sick person's desire for his visit after the latter's demise. He would regret this greatly and say: "Had I known, I would have certainly gone to fulfil his wish."

I recall Hadrat Wālā's own statement about his affection and concern. He said: "I may be of a very free disposition but I cannot even bear to see my enemy in pain. When I see anyone in the slightest pain, I feel like removing my heart and placing it before him."

No Special Clothes For Travelling

Hadrat Wālā did not have any special clothes for travelling. Instead, he used to wear the same simple clothes which he wore at home. He did not wear a cloak, overcoat or turban. He confined himself to his kurtah, pants and topī. On one occasion he was departing on a journey with his normal simple clothes. His senior wife advised him to wear a new set of clothes. He asked: "Why? Do I have to show off to anyone?" She replied: "That is not my reason. Rather, the wisdom behind it is that you should wear such clothes on a journey that when your associates and followers see you, they feel satisfied that you are living a comfortable life and that you are not in poverty. If they see you in straitened circumstances they would assume you to be in poverty. This will cause them to unnecessarily think of giving you gifts." Hadrat Wālā said: "This intention is certainly very good." He quotes her words with approval quite often. Despite this, his natural inclination always took precedence over her wise reasoning, and he would journey in his normal simple way.

Hadrat Wālā was waiting on the platform of the Sahāranpūr railway station for the train to arrive. He had a basket of cucumbers placed before him. The excellent quality of the cucumbers of Sahāranpūr was well known, and someone had given them to him as a gift. A villager walked pass and asked: "How much are you selling the cucumbers for?" Hadrat Wālā simply replied: "They are not for sale."

Are You Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī?

He was returning from Pānīpat on one occasion. In order to get onto the sub-route, he boarded a train from Delhi. This train was heading for Shāhid Reh. Since no one was informed in Delhi, there was no one to meet him at the Delhi station. There was just one person who had accompanied him from Pānīpat. A Punjabi man was sitting in the same coach. He asked Hadrat Wālā: "Where are you going to?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Thānah Bhawan." When the man heard this, he asked enthusiastically:

"Do you know Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "My name is Ashraf ʿAlī." The man started looking at him in astonishment from top to bottom, and asked several times: "Are you really Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī!?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Does he have some special appearance which you cannot apply to me?" The man fell silent but was still not convinced because he had heard a lot about Hadrat Wālā and seen his many writings and imagined that if he was such a great scholar, he must be dressing in regal clothes with an impressive cloak, overcoat and turban. Especially now that he was on a journey, he thought that if this is really Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī, he would have a large group of people travelling with him, he would have had attendants at his beck and call. But here he does not even have a single attendant. Although Hadrat Wālā normally had several people with him, and attendants from different places would join him along the way, there was no one on that particular day because no one was informed, and his clothes too were absolutely plain and simple.

In short, when the Punjabi man saw Hadrat Wālā in this condition, he did not believe it was really him. So he posed an academic question in order to test Hadrat Wālā. He replied with a very logical, detailed and scholarly answer. When he heard his comprehensive, concise, eloquent and academic answer, he was convinced he was really Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. He then accorded him utmost respect and reverence, and considered himself most fortunate to be in his company. When Hadrat Wālā got off at the Shāhid Reh station, the man carried his luggage for him and embraced him with genuine faith.

Saving The Host From Inconvenience And Companions From Humiliation

It was Hadrat Wālā's practice to never accept another's invitation without first obtaining permission from his host. Another practice was that if anyone wanted to accompany him – even if it was his close relative – he would say to him: "You must make your own arrangements for your fare and food. It is not permissible to impose on the host to pay for your fare and food unless he himself requests it." In fact, Hadrat Wālā would carry extra money with the intention that if any poor person was extremely desirous of travelling with him, he would be able to help him with that money and fulfil his wish in this way. I

clearly remember Hadrat Wālā personally paying for a few devoted associates for the long journey to Rangoon.

Hadrat Wālā would instruct all companions to make their own arrangements for food. If a host wished to invite them as well, he would say to him: “You must first request them yourself. If they ask me for permission, I will permit them.” In this way, Hadrat Wālā used every way to save his companions from embarrassment. But no companion was permitted to accept a host’s invitation without first obtaining permission from Hadrat Wālā. As for informal occasions, Hadrat Wālā would not be too strict; he would give permission.

If anyone sat down to eat without the host’s request and joined in merely because he had been accompanying Hadrat Wālā, he would reprimand and scold him, and ask him to leave. If there was a need for more strictness, he would stop the person from proceeding with him for the rest of the journey. If any host intended giving gifts to Hadrat Wālā and his companions as well, Hadrat Wālā would never permit it because it would create a bad habit, and at the same time, save his companions from becoming parasites. Furthermore, they would be saved from such wealth which was not given with a good heart, was given merely because they were present, and they would not have received had they been there on their own.

One of Hadrat Wālā’s companions accepted a turban as a gift when he saw the companions of another fellow pious personality accepting similar gifts. When Hadrat Wālā came to know of it, he made his companion send it back by post so that it may serve as a lesson to him. But because the turban had come in his ownership, Hadrat Wālā gave his own turban which he had received as a gift from the same place as a replacement to this companion.

Importance To Congregational Salāh Even On A Train

I had the opportunity of travelling with Hadrat Wālā on many lengthy journeys but never faced any difficulty in performing salāh with congregation. On almost every occasion, congregational salāh used to be performed in the railway coach. I witnessed Allāh’s grace time and again when despite large crowds of passengers, Hadrat Wālā’s coach almost always had sufficient place for salāh and every journey was undertaken with real peace.

Comfort And Peace On The Journey

Hadrat Wālā undertook countless journeys but, by the grace and kindness of Allāh *taʿālā*, they were always covered with peace and comfort. If ever there was any temporary difficulty, it was overcome very quickly and replaced with far more comfort. I heard from one of his travelling companions that when Hadrat Wālā was bringing his junior wife from Mumbai to Lahore after her return from hajj, his step-daughter who was very young at the time was restless due to extreme thirst. The next station was quite far, and they were worried about what could be done. The train suddenly stopped at a spot where there was a river below. A bucket of water was drawn from it and given to the little girl. This was certainly a gift from Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Wālā was invited to a certain place, but when he reached the station, there was no one to receive him. He came back without leaving the station. Subsequently, he made a condition that anyone who wanted him to come to any place must first send someone to accompany him throughout the journey so that he does not experience any difficulty anywhere. However, the person whom they send must not be of such a respectable level that he considers it below his dignity when any task is given to him. He must be an attendant or an informal friend. This remained Hadrat Wālā's continued practice, and it resulted in all round comfort on his journeys.

Guarding Against Worry And Inconvenience

It was Hadrat Wālā's practice not to arrange to meet any person at a particular station from where they would get together and continue on their journey. He avoided this even though the alternative cost him more money. Instead, he would either ask the person to come to his place of departure, or Hadrat Wālā would go to his place of departure. The two would then continue on their journey and would always remain together so that both could be on the same condition. Real worry and concern for the two is caused when one arranges to meet the other at a certain place, and either of the two is unable to reach at the appointed time.

Some womenfolk accompanied Hadrat Wālā on his journey to Bharatpūr. They had to travel by horse and cart from the Mathrā railway station. Their destination was at quite a

distance. If they left late, there was the danger of having to travel in the dark. Hadrat Wālā performed two rakʿats fard of zuhr salāh [because he was a traveller] and departed. He did not perform the Sunnats. He said: "When on a journey, the status of the Sunnah salāhs drops to optional. And when necessary, they can be left out completely. To abstain from practising on the concessions of the Sharīʿah at time of necessity results in imposing unnecessary burden and fatigue on one's self, and it also entails ingratitude to Allāh *taʿālā* to a certain extent.

Remain Firm On Principles At All Times

Hadrat Wālā did not undertake any journey because he was impressed by a certain person's external awe and influence. Nor did he permit any changes to his principles. A Nawāb Sāhib who belonged to a very influential family sent two hundred rupees as a donation to Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm Thānah Bhawan. This Madrasah is running under the supervision of Hadrat Wālā within the khānqāh, and without any announcements for donations. In addition to sending this money, the Nawāb Sāhib requested Hadrat Wālā to visit him. Hadrat Wālā sent the money back with the following note: "Had you not mentioned anything about inviting me to your place, I would have accepted this money. By attaching this request with the money gives the impression that the money was sent to impress me. Although this may not be your intention, it will place a natural burden on me. I will not be able to come to a proper decision about coming or not coming with an open mind because I will feel ashamed to refuse your invitation." The Nawāb Sāhib replied with an apology and wrote: "After you brought this point to my attention, I realized I was certainly very ill-mannered. I take back my request for you to come here, and I am resending the money. Kindly accept it for the Madrasah." Hadrat Wālā accepted it happily and wrote back: "Till now, you were desirous of meeting me. But now your manners and decency have made me desirous of meeting you." Subsequently, the Nawāb Sāhib invited Hadrat Wālā, and he accepted, but on condition no gift is presented to him.

When Hadrat Wālā was about to leave the Nawāb Sāhib's house, his mother who was Hadrat Wālā's Pīr Behen wanted to give 100 rupees as a gift to him. But he refused because it was against the condition which he had made. The Nawāb Sāhib

said: "But this is from my mother." Hadrat Wālā said: "What difference whether it is from the mother or the son; it is from the same house." He said: "Hadrat, if it is really someone's desire to serve another, what should he do?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "I am not a homeless person after all. It is possible for you to come to my place." By the will of Allāh, the Nawāb Sāhib was an intelligent and cultured person, and a member of an old and respectable religious family. He did not persist. Hadrat Wālā speaks highly of him quite often.

After a considerable time, he came personally to Thānah Bhawan and presented three guineas to Hadrat Wālā which he accepted happily and respectfully. It was also a mark of the Nawāb Sāhib's intelligence that he did not give the same previous amount so that it is not considered to be a norm, it does not burden Hadrat Wālā, his mind does not go to the previous incident, and the present money be considered to be a completely different gift. Subsequently, by virtue of the Nawāb Sāhib's suitability and confidence, a special bond was established between the two.

An Incident Related to The Nawāb of Dhaka

I recall two similar incidents. A long time after Hadrat Wālā's first journey to Dhaka (some mention of it was made previously), a delegation of 'ulamā' from Deoband went there to attend a conference. The Nawāb Sāhib extended a very enthusiastic invitation to Hadrat Wālā but he excused himself because he abstained from attending such conferences. But he had to undertake this journey when the elders of Deoband insisted. Nevertheless, Hadrat Wālā still took the precaution of paying for his own fare so that if any unpleasant incident occurs, he can return without any restriction. And this is exactly what happened.

The Nawāb Sāhib had made arrangements for the housing and feeding of all the guests in Calcutta because they had to go through there in order to proceed to Dhaka. A Ra'īs Sāhib who was the Nawāb Sāhib's friend was in charge of making all the arrangements. He expressed his joy at Hadrat Wālā's arrival and said: "The Nawāb Sāhib is most pleased by your coming because he was quite despondent by your previous refusal." Hadrat Wālā asked: "Did the Nawāb Sāhib mention anything to you about the reason for my refusal?" He replied: "He did say something about your preconditions being very strict, and

which he could not accept." Hadrat Wālā asked: "What were those perquisites?" He replied: "One was that no gift must be presented to you." (When relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā informed us that this prerequisite had been made on the first trip, not now. He got mixed up. Notwithstanding this) Hadrat Wālā said: "What is so difficult about not giving me any gifts? It is normally difficult to give something, but not difficult to abstain from giving." The Ra'īs Sāhib said: "If you love someone, your heart naturally wants to give him a gift. How can a person not serve his beloved?!" Hadrat Wālā asked: "Why is it so necessary to constantly call one's beloved to one's house in order to give him a gift? If someone is so enthusiastic, he could go personally to the beloved's house and present the gift, or he could send it to him." The Ra'īs Sāhib replied: "Sir, pardon me, but a thirsty man goes to the well, the well does not go to him." Hadrat Wālā was most insulted by his impudence and rudeness. He said: "I see. You think you are the well and we are the thirsty ones. Whereas we are convinced that you are the thirsty one and we are the wells. I also have proof for what I am saying. There are two necessities, Dīn and this world. You have one of the things which we need, and we have one of the things which you need. But there is a difference: the thing which we need and which you have - this world – we also have sufficient for our needs. As for what you need and which we have – Dīn – you do not even have enough of it. So now who is dependent on whom – you on us, or we on you? Are you the thirsty ones and we the wells, or are we the thirsty ones and you the wells?" The man fell silent and was most ashamed.

Hadrat Wālā was most displeased by the Ra'īs Sāhib's rudeness. He presented a subtle excuse to his companions, left the place, went to a musjid and stayed over with the imām of the musjid. Janāb Hāfiz Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the ex-principal of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, came to the musjid and begged Hadrat Wālā to accompany them to Dhaka but he replied: "I have already made a firm resolution to return." He boarded the first available train and went to Allāhābād because he had promised someone there that he would stop over on his return.

In the first place, the journey to Dhaka was against Hadrat Wālā's disposition. Then this unpleasant incident on the way was experienced. So the excuse to return became extremely

strong. Hadrat Wālā paying for his own fare at the very beginning really came to his help now. If not, he would have been constrained and would not have been able to return so freely. This is the far-sight which the Hadīth extols, and which is far above the level of an exposition. When the Nawāb Sāhib heard of what transpired, he sent a telegram, but Hadrat Wālā had already resolved to go back, so he did not remain. He sent an appropriate reply to the telegram after reaching Allāhābād.

A judge by the name of Janāb Akbar Husayn Sāhib Marhūm who had a special bond with Hadrat Wālā was overjoyed by his return because he had been against Hadrat Wālā going in this manner – in a delegation - to the wealthy ones.

An Incident Concerning a Ra'īsah[1]

A similar incident occurred after the completion of the musjid for the student's hostel at Madrasah Mazāhir al-'Ulūm Sahāranpūr. The funds for the completion of this musjid were provided by a religious minded Ra'īsah. When the construction was complete, she organized an opening ceremony in the Madrasah. She set a date for her arrival and wrote to the principal informing him to convey the message to the supervisors, heads and other committee members to come to the Madrasah on that day. The principal sent out letters together with an invitation to attend. Hadrat Wālā refused to attend by writing a letter to the principal and informing him thus: "The Ra'īsah has no right to summon us in such an authoritarian tone. It is uncultured to call upon someone in such a dictatorial way. Is this how you call someone?! I am not going to come. Would she have invited a fellow Ra'īsah in this manner?"

The principal persisted on Hadrat Wālā to come for the good of the Madrasah. He wrote to Hadrat Wālā and informed him that it was not her doing, but her secretary's. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "I still have an objection to coming. Why was this matter left to the secretary? She should have personally checked the invitation as is the norm with kings and rulers when sending out invitations." Hadrat Wālā added: "I will not come just because she summoned me. But if you order me, I am prepared

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[1] The word Ra'īs (Ra'īsah for female) refers to a noble wealthy person, a prince, etc. The original has been maintained for easy reading.

to come to you walking on my head." Hadrat Wālā eventually went on condition he will not meet her nor converse with her either directly or indirectly. The principal considered this to be a boon and requested him to come.

Hadrat Wālā went as a guest of the Madrasah and delivered a very impressive speech which was attended by the Ra'īsah as well. After completing his speech, he proceeded directly to the railway station so that the principal or any of his associates do not have an opportunity to say anything to him or to insist on him in any way. In fact, he departed without even meeting Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. The Ra'īsah sent Hadrat Wālā's share of sweetmeats to the station. As a precaution, she asked her messenger to convey to him that the sweetmeats were not from the general distribution but specifically from her own distribution. He should therefore not hesitate in accepting them. She was quite perceptive and feared that because Hadrat Wālā was quite strong-minded, he might hesitate in accepting what had been made for general distribution. Anyway, she realized that there can be strong-minded people among the 'ulamā'.

Rectifying Haughty People

In short, Hadrat Wālā was very particular about 'ulamā' not having to suffer any humiliation which, nowadays, is quite common among the people, especially the affluent and influential ones. Whereas they have no such right and this uncultured attitude can never be sanctioned. This is more so when you consider the fact that Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed the 'ulamā' as the bearers of Dīn, the protectors of Islam and the inheritors of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. In light of the current situation and in keeping with the demands of the time, Hadrat Wālā made it his priority to make the proud and haughty ones fully aware of this:

> Do not scorn the ardent fakirs. They are the real kings even though they do not have girdles and crowns.

Although some with warped minds consider it to be pride, but as per the words of Hadrat Wālā: "It is better to be labelled a haughty person than to be labelled a flatterer. Furthermore, in today's times:

التكبر مع المتكبرين عبادة

It is an act of worship to act haughtily with the haughty ones.

There is also a severe need for it because when, in these obstinate and Pharaonic times, the people of Dīn are seen with real scorn and denigration, it becomes the responsibility of the Mujaddid of the time to rectify the situation and to demonstrate that every Pharaoh will meet his Moses.

The fourteenth century needed a reformer who caused the most arrogant tyrants to submit before the truth, made them Muslims in the true sense of the word, and made them accept the greatness of Islam and those who were affiliated with it. If the task of reformation was his duty, it would have been treacherous to disregard his responsibility out of fear of defamation. However, bearing in mind that consideration of ranks is also from among the objectives of the Sharīʿah, Hadrat Wālā never allowed himself to become unmannered. Instead, he would give due consideration even to materialistic influential people, and deal with them in a most cultured manner provided they did not say or do anything unbecoming. His manner in dealing with a person or taking him to task would be in strict accordance with the principles until the other person had no alternative but to acknowledge his mistake. Hadrat Wālā announces openly: "Anyone who claims to be more cultured than the culture taught by Islam must come and stay with me for a few days and see for himself. I place my trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and say that – inshā Allāh – he will acknowledge with his own mouth that he was really uncultured and the real culture is the one taught by the sanctified Sharīʿah."

Janāb Hafīz Marhūm Jaunpūrī was a well-known poet who had very liberal ways in the beginning. After having established a bond with Hadrat Wālā, he wrote in his periodical, *Ma'āl*: "I learnt and acquired culture by staying in the company of rulers and great culturists throughout my life. But after going to Thānah Bhawan, I realized that what I had learnt in the past was actually the total opposite of culture." Hadrat Wālā says: "I take great joy in having modern day claimants to culture to admit that they are in fact uncultured. This is because they consider us, 'ulamā', to be absolutely uncouth animals. Their haughtiness and claims are defeated by this admission."

Consideration Of Ranks

When Hadrat Wālā journeyed to different states, he made it a point – through subtle ruses – to avoid having to meet the governors and princes of those states. He would not go personally to meet them, but it they came to meet him, he would receive them with absolute decorum despite his independent disposition. This was in line with the teaching of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

أنزلوا الناس منازلهم

Treat people according to their ranks.

He would also take due consideration of their ranks and positions in other forms of interaction with them.

The Nawāb Sāhib of Dhaka had invited Hadrat Wālā for the *Bismillāh*[1] ceremony of his daughters. Hadrat Wālā had made a precondition that he will not accept any gift either in cash or kind. On the other hand, the Nawāb Sāhib had an ardent desire to find some excuse or other to present something to Hadrat Wālā. Long before this ceremony, he sent a note to Hadrat Wālā informing him thus: "It has been an old practice in our family to certainly present some cash on the occasion of *Bismillāh*. If I do not do this it will be a serious disgrace for me. I hope you will not tolerate my disgrace by permitting me to present you with a gift." Hadrat Wālā replied: "There can be a very easy way of avoiding your disgrace, viz. I will accept your gift in the presence of everyone and return it to you in privacy. In this way, your dignity will be maintained and my wish will be fulfilled. And I promise you I will never make mention of this to anyone for the rest of my life." The Nawāb Sāhib flatly refused this proposal and said: "Hadrat, I can sacrifice my dignity for your sake."

An Incident In Bahāwalpūr And Khayrpūr

Hadrat Wālā was included among the ʿulamā' who were invited by the state of Bahāwalpūr. They were given 150 rupees each

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[1] A custom of calling a pious person to initiate a child when starting to learn to read the Qur'ān. This is done to obtain the blessings of the pious person.

as *khulʿat*[1] and 25 rupees each as *daʿwat* (a token of respect and invitation). Hadrat Wālā accepted these amounts in the presence of the ʿulamā' and out of respect to the Ra'īs Sāhib. But when he met the minister privately, he returned the money to him saying: "I am returning it because it was given from the Islamic treasury from which I am not eligible to receive." The minister replied: "These amounts have already been recorded in the books of the treasury as payments, there is no way of putting the money back." Hadrat Wālā said: "Very well, if it cannot be put back into the treasury, it must be spent on the local ʿulamā' and students because they are the most eligible to receive according to the Sharīʿah." In short, Hadrat Wālā returned everything, but in a very respectable and beautiful manner.

The same occurred in Khayrpūr, Sindh. There the excuse which was offered was that the Nawāb Sāhib will be displeased if the *khulʿat* was returned. Hadrat Wālā said: "If you fear that this will happen, why should you even inform him? The cash which I received in the name of *khulʿat* can be distributed among the poor because they are its rightful recipients." Hadrat Wālā relates: "Since – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – my intention is correct, He enables me to think up some sort of sensible solution on such occasions so that others are compelled to agree with me and – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I do not have to be forced into doing something against the Sharīʿah or against my temperament."

An Incident In Hyderabad

When Hadrat Wālā journeyed to Hyderabad, an aged scholar wanted to have the womenfolk of his house inducted as murīds. He tried to obtain permission to bring them before Hadrat Wālā without hijāb/purdah but Hadrat Wālā refused. He eventually resorted to this plan: He seated them in their chadors and, when Hadrat Wālā entered the room for the induction, the elderly man said to the women: "You may uncover your faces, what is the need to observe purdah with him!?" He now put Hadrat Wālā in a tight spot. But instead of Hadrat Wālā entering into an altercation with the elderly man which could not have brought any positive results and the women would have uncovered their faces in the meantime,

[1] A robe of honour conferred by a prince as a mark of distinction.

Hadrat Wālā immediately threatened the women directly by saying: "Don't you dare uncover your faces." So one side the elderly man was telling them to uncover their faces, and on the other side Hadrat Wālā was warning them against uncovering their faces. Since they were seated there for the sake of being inducted as murīds, they had to obey Hadrat Wālā and did not uncover their faces. Hadrat Wālā succeeded in his tactic.

Rectifying A Minister's Daughter

A daughter of a minister from a major state came personally to Thānah Bhawan with her husband. She also wanted to meet Hadrat Wālā with her face uncovered and sought permission for this via Hadrat Wālā's junior wife. He considered it unwise to refuse explicitly because when injunctions of the Sharīʿah are mentioned before free-minded people, they do not have any regard for them and their hearts are not inclined to accept them. In fact, it is not far-fetched for them to criticize the Sharīʿah or utter some words of derision. He therefore resorted to a subtle plan. He said: "If she has nothing to say to me or does not wish to hear me say anything, I will permit her [to uncover her face]." Hadrat Wālā had gauged that she certainly wanted to enter into a conversation with him, so she will not come [uncovered] before him. Furthermore, by answering in this way Hadrat Wālā thought to himself that he will keep his eyes lowered, so there is no problem. But the woman sent a message saying that she certainly needs to speak to him. Hadrat Wālā replied: "I am naturally indisposed to speaking with a woman directly and feel very shy. If you speak to me with your face uncovered, I will not be able to even speak to you. I am compelled by my nature. So if you want to speak to me, it will have to be behind a veil." The woman was forced to accept.

Shame And Modesty

It was really true that Hadrat Wālā, due to his shame and modesty, could not speak directly to a woman. When he used to board any conveyance [like a train], he would look for a place where there would be no one seated to his left because if there was, it would cause a lot of discomfort to him. Moreover, when a train passed by, he would not raise his eyes to look at the passengers as is the norm of the people. He says: "I feel

ashamed to do that." In addition to it being a futile act, the possibility of one's gaze falling on a woman always exists.

Whenever Hadrat Wālā went on a journey, large crowds of people would be there to receive him or bid him farewell. These large crowds on the stations would make it difficult for other travellers to walk pass. The large numbers made it very difficult to shake hands with everyone. So he would extend both hands separately in different directions. People would come forward and, in their extreme love, kiss them on both sides. In the meantime, Hadrat Wālā would turn his attention to each person. The desire to shake hands with him would continue until the train gained momentum and left the station.

General Adoration

Allāh *taʿālā* blessed Hadrat Wālā with so much of adoration in the eyes of the masses that some weak-minded people assumed he possessed some sort of power with which he subdued people. A person said to one of Hadrat Wālā's associates: "If you are unable to at least learn how to subdue people from him, you have acquired nothing from him. He has a very powerful procedure for it." Hadrat Wālā related this to us with a smile and said: "Some people had the same thoughts about Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Consequently, a person sat in his assembly with the same notion. Hadrat Shāh Sāhib received [unseen] knowledge of it, so he said: 'I seek refuge in Allāh. I seek forgiveness from Allāh. When a person engages in such practices, his affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* is taken away from him.'"

Physical Strength And Cheerfulness

By the help and grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā did not experience such fatigue in even lengthy journeys which could have caused obstacles in carrying out his necessary tasks. Very often I saw him travelling the entire night, not sleeping at all, yet the very next morning he would deliver speeches with full force for several hours and also complete replying to the letters which he received. On one occasion, he delivered a speech until mid-night and then sat down to reply to the letters. He had a small rest but it was just in name. I remember very well how my senses used to become confused because of insufficient sleep, but – by Allāh's will – Hadrat Wālā was not really

affected. He would remain engrossed in delivering lectures, writing and replying to letters.

I recall a Maulānā Sāhib saying to me: "Maulānā is most certainly using some herb. Māshā Allāh, he is very healthy. You must find out what herb he is using." When I related this to Hadrat Wālā, he laughed and said: "He is crazy." He added: "Here, let me tell you what herb I am using, it is a bond with Allāh through which my heart is always strong and tranquil, and I always feel cheerful and positive. These are the roots of good health." By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's health is certainly very good. All praise is due to Allāh, he is always healthy, energetic and cheerful. There is a lot of force in his voice, it is very loud, and I saw extreme power and authority in his speech whereas I had occasions of seeing him after sad occasions and calamities. May Allāh *taʿālā* increase Hadrat Wālā's external and internal health, and may He continue his blessings and bestowals.

Work Continues Even During Illness

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā rarely falls ill. When he does fall ill, he recovers very quickly from even the most serious ailments. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he recovers from illnesses within a few days which normally take others several months to recover from. His work is never affected during his illness; he continues working. Allāh *taʿālā* wants as much work from him, so He enables him to do this. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep it this way, and may He bless him with extraordinary long life with health, wellness, goodness and blessings. Āmīn.

The Ahādīth mention certain virtues and rewards of illness. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred these to Hadrat Wālā through two impediments which are almost perpetually with him. One is the hernia [which was mentioned previously] and the other is vapours which fill the brains, causing insomnia most of the time. Sometimes several days pass in this way before he can get a full sleep. Were it not for Allāh's help, it would have been very difficult to bear. All praise is due to Allāh, he is experiencing some relief in the first ailment, but not enough to enable to him undertake any journey. He is also adopting some measures for the second illness. Inshā Allāh, he will get relief from it as well.

Despite all this, it is not affecting his work in any way. In fact, Hadrat Wālā says: "When I don't get sleep and the temperature in the brain increases, I feel more energized and stimulated, and am able to do much more work." Anyway, he is receiving the rewards for the illnesses, and the work too is continuing unabated.

Allāh-Bestowed Awe And Respect

Hadrat Wālā had immense faith and confidence in the pious elders from the very beginning. This is why he undertook several journeys to visit them. Details in this regard will be provided in the next chapter. He also went on a few journeys for the sake of medical treatment for his wives. He had to stay over in women's hospitals where Christian female doctors used to accord utmost respect to him. Although they were not in purdah and quite bold, they would bow their heads down when passing him, and express their innermost respect and awe for him to others.

Rectifying A Ra'īs

The following is related by Hāfiz Saghīr Ahmad Sāhib. When Hadrat Wālā went to Muzaffar Nagar, a Ra'īs who was extremely audacious, outspoken and refused to submit before senior leaders asked something insolent to Hadrat Wālā. As per his habit, Hadrat Wālā reprimanded him. His annoyance increased to the extent that he instructed the Ra'īs to leave the assembly. But he remained seated. Hadrat Wālā got up himself and said: "If you are not going to leave I will leave because I cannot even tolerate sitting in the same place with such a person." The man clasped his hands like a beggar and said: "Hadrat, you may remain seated, I am leaving." He got up and left.

Later the Ra'īs said to Hāfiz Sāhib: "I have been cured for the rest of my life. I had always looked down at the 'ulamā' and maulānās with scorn and derision. But now I respect and revere every maulānā because I fear he may turn out to be like him [Hadrat Wālā]. I am not intimidated by the greatest of rulers, but I was so intimidated by the Maulānā on that day, I could not utter a single word after he reprimanded me." The following couplet is true:

> This is the awe of the truth, not of the creation. It is not the awe of the one in tattered and torn clothes.

Religious Blessings

Whether Hadrat Wālā's journeys were for medical treatment or personal needs, the Muslims always received religious blessings from him because no matter where he went, people would come in droves to listen to his words of wisdom, and insist on him to deliver lectures.

Eating For Allāh's Sake

Hadrat Wālā was honoured with the opportunity of visiting Makkah and Madīnah on two occasions. Full details in this regard will be provided in a later chapter – inshā Allāh.

When his ship reached Mumbai on his return from his second hajj, a wealthy man began distributing food to the returning pilgrims and also sent some to the traveller's lodge. When Hadrat Wālā's companions enquired about the nature of the food, they were informed that it was for Allāh's sake. When they heard this, they refused to accept it saying: "We are not needy people. We cannot take what was given for Allāh's sake." Hadrat Wālā said: "Brothers, bring the food here. We will certainly accept what was given for Allāh's sake." He added jokingly: "These people will accept it if it was distributed in Satan's name, but not when distributed in Allāh's name." When Hadrat Wālā accepted the food, his companions followed suite. Hadrat Wālā explained: "When they say that it is for Allāh's sake, it does not mean that they consider you to be poor, that is why they are giving it to you. What it means is that they are giving it without expecting anything in return from you, nor do they have any ulterior motives. After all, do the people who distribute this food not know that the majority of pilgrims are wealthy?!"

A Fountain Blessings

In short, every journey of Hadrat Wālā used to be a copiously flowing river of blessings through which various lands were irrigated. Māshā Allāh, even now – although he does not travel anymore – he is like an ocean from which the winds of rains start to blow, and as they rise, they go and irrigate far off and distant lands. While the ocean remains firm in its place.

In conclusion, Hadrat Wālā undertook lengthy journeys over a long period of time through which he rendered the service of conveying the injunctions of Islam. He is now settled in his centre, Khānqāh Imdādīyyah Thānah Bhawan, where he is seated as a lighthouse of instruction and guidance, and fully occupied in reforming the creation with absolute authority and influence. He is an embodiment of the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh*:

> Quite some time has passed since I have been serving this house of love. I may be clothed as a fakir, but I am doing the work of the wealthy and affluent ones.

MEETING PIOUS ELDERS

Love For Ahlullāh Since Childhood

Hadrat Wālā has intense love for and confidence in the Ahlullāh since childhood. He is so immersed in his love for them that he will relate their biographies and stories for lengthy periods of time in his assemblies. He will take immense joy in relating their stories and would do it with such passion that he himself would be affected by them and also affect those who are present. When relating their stories, he would say: "These are people who are intoxicated [in Allāh's love]. Consequently, their stories intoxicate those who listen to them." Because of these stories, his morning assembly will extend far beyond the stipulated time and he would end up having his breakfast quite late. He often says: "Just mentioning the names of these elders brings life to the soul and creates light in the heart." This makes me think of the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib *rahimahullāh*:

> My name was mistakenly mentioned by my beloved. Consequently, the people of the heart continue perceiving the fragrance of the beloved whenever my name is mentioned.

Studying The Lives Of The Pious

Generally, Hadrat Wālā is not too interested in looking at books, but he continues studying *Tabaqāt Kubrā* – a collection of biographies and statements of pious elders – with much interest despite his many occupations. Since he does not have any other time, he is often seen reading this book before sunset, although it is difficult to read at such a time. Whenever he gets an opportunity, he selects certain sayings and stories from it. He titled this selection, *Amthāl al-Aqwāl wa al-Ahwāl li Afādil ar-Rijāl* (examples of statements and stories of distinguished personalities). He considers the biographies of the pious elders most beneficial. He therefore collated 1 000 of their stories and published this collection under the title *Nuzhatul Basātīn* (a stroll through the gardens).

A Prescription For Creating Love For Allāh

He says with full confidence: "These personalities were true lovers of Allāh *taʿālā*. It is impossible to study their lives without developing love for Allāh *taʿālā* in one's heart. Allāh's mercy descends when the righteous are discussed."

Hadrat Wālā has had intense love for and confidence in the pious elders and righteous personalities since the very beginning. These personalities too considered him to be the apple of their eyes. We often hear him saying: "I neither studied too hard during my student days nor did I go through a lot of spiritual exertion in the Sufi way. Whatever Allāh *taʿālā* gave me was through the supplications and attention of my teachers and spiritual elders, and a fruit of my absolute respect for them." He also says: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I can say that I did not displease any pious personality for a single minute."

Travelling To Meet Allāh's Pious Servants

His intense love for the pious demanded that in addition to visiting the personalities of the Imdādīyyah Silsilah – with whom he had a special and strong bond, and interacted and intermingled quite often – he ought to visit and meet some of the elders of the other spiritual lineages. He undertook special journeys to this end. A few examples in this regard are related below.

Hadrat Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī

Hadrat Wālā travelled on two occasions to Ganj Murādābād to meet Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*. Hadrat Wālā takes much delight in relating details about these two trips. These have been penned and published in his book, *Arwāh Thalāthah*, under the heading *Nayl al-Murād fī Safar ilā Ganj Murādābād* (fulfilment of my desire in my journey to Ganj Murādābād). Details can be found there. The gist is related here.

Hadrat Wālā's first trip was most probably in Rabīʿ ath-Thānī or Jumādā al-Ūlā 1310 A.H. when he was quite young, recently qualified from Deoband, and had went to Madrasah Fayd ʿĀm, Kānpūr as a new teacher. He resigned from his post after two months because of certain reasons (which were related in a previous chapter) and decided to return to Thānah Bhawan.

When he decided to leave Kānpūr, he felt he should seize the opportunity of visiting Hadrat Maulānā because he did not know whether he will get a chance of coming to this region again. He took a student as his companion and presented himself before Hadrat Maulānā with genuine enthusiasm and love. They did not know the road so they lost their way and eventually reached quite late. The ‘ishā congregation was over and Hadrat Maulānā had already left the musjid and proceeded to his room. They informed him of their arrival via an attendant. The Maulānā called for them immediately, and posed three questions in quick succession in his own unique tone: “Who are you? Where have you come from? Why have you come?” The Maulānā’s very simple and straightforward tone sounded a bit sharp. Even when he spoke with an affectionate and warm tone, it sounded sharp. Hadrat Wālā answered the three questions very respectfully but in the same concise manner in which they were posed.

He said: “I am a student, I have come from Kānpūr, and I came to visit you.” The Maulānā did not know the reason for their late arrival, and it was most difficult to make arrangements for meals at this late hour. So he said in his same sharp tone: “Is this the time to visit someone? A person should at least come a bit early so that food and other arrangements could be made. Now tell me, where am I going to get food for you?” His anger too was based on kindness. Although Hadrat Wālā had a reasonable excuse for his late arrival, his absolute respect, deference and love for the pious did not permit him to present his excuse at this point. He considered it disrespectful and ill-mannered to even bring it on his lips. This really shows his magnanimity and politeness because the seekers of today resort to false explanations for their failings and do their utmost not to shoulder any blame. Hadrat Wālā is by and large angered by such false explanations which are offered by the seekers of today and always complains about their lack of respect.

Hadrat Wālā remained standing silently. The Maulānā asked: “Do you have any money with you?” He replied in the affirmative. He said: “Okay, go to the shops, buy something to eat and leave in the morning.” Hadrat Wālā said: “Very well.” The Maulānā addressed his attendant: “Take him to such and such place, and house him there for the night.” Hadrat Wālā was taken to that place where he began unpacking his goods.

While doing this, he was thinking to himself that he will go to the shops, buy something to eat and depart the next morning as instructed. But a short while later an attendant came in and informed him that the Maulānā was calling him. Hadrat Wālā thought to himself: “Something else must have crossed his heart. Let me go to him, after all I have come here to listen to his talks.” He followed the attendant and stood before Maulānā. He said: “Sit down.” His tone was just as sharp, but kindness and affection were certainly present this time round. This can be gauged from his subsequent attitude. The Maulānā’s tone was naturally like this. This is why Hadrat Wālā says: “He had a simple disposition; there were no airs and formalities about him.”

When the Maulānā asked him to sit down, then instead of sitting on the bedstead which was there, Hadrat Wālā sat down respectfully on the straw mat which was laid out. The Maulānā said: “Come, sit here on the bedstead.” Hadrat Wālā got up and sat on the bedstead. He did not respond with formalities which have become the norm of the seekers of today. The Maulānā addressed his attendant: “Go to my daughter’s house and bring them some food.” The attendant departed immediately and came back with the food. There was some curry – most probably pulse – in a bowl, and a few rotis were placed on top of the bowl. When the attendant placed the food before him and the Maulānā looked at it, he became extremely angry and said: “You uncivilized fellow! Is this how you present food to guests? You should have brought the rotis in a separate plate and the curry in a separate utensil. What style is this that you place the rotis on the bowl and present it here?” The attendant came up with a story of not being able to find a plate. The Maulānā said: “You are lying. Are the plates not kept on that certain shelf?” The attendant hastened and came back with a plate. When Hadrat Wālā started eating, the Maulānā asked: “What food is it?” He replied: “It is a curry of pulse and rotis.” The Maulānā said: “Glory to Allāh! This is a great bounty. You are an educated person, you studied under Maulwī Muhammad Yaʿqūb.”

The Maulānā received divine inspiration as regards under whom Hadrat Wālā studied and also of his capabilities because the Maulānā was not in the habit of treating anyone with such attention; especially with someone as young and newly arrived as Hadrat Wālā. He then said with regard to Hadrat Maulānā

Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*: "He was a very good man." The Maulānā was not in the habit of overly praising anyone. So referring to Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib as a very good man was an extremely high praise. It also proves the spiritual bond which existed between him and Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib.

The Maulānā added: "You are an educated person, you know the conditions which were endured by the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum*: They used to eat just one dry date and go out in jihād and wage battle the entire day." When he continued speaking about the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* he went into a fervour and stood up. It was his noble habit to go into a fervour when speaking about pious personalities. So he got up, went and stood by Hadrat Wālā, placed his hand on his shoulder and continued speaking about the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* for a long time. Hadrat Wālā continued eating. They also exchanged questions and answers about the shortening of salāh [for a traveller]. This incident clearly demonstrates the Maulānā's special spiritual bond with Hadrat Wālā, perception of his capabilities and confidence in him.

The Maulānā asked: "Will you have some *ber*[1]?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Yes, it will be a source of blessing because it is from Hadrat." He said: "Leave aside this talk of blessings, do you experience stomach pains by eating *ber*?" Hadrat Wālā replied in the negative. The Maulānā went and brought a utensil which was filled with grafted *ber*. He emptied the utensil in front of Hadrat Wālā and said: "Eat." He then said by way of light-heartedness: "Let it not be that you think to yourself that I ate everything by myself and did not even bother to inquire about the guest." The Maulānā added: "When you finish eating, you must perform your 'ishā and go to sleep. We will meet in the morning." The Maulānā left.

I don't think an independent and free-minded person like Hadrat Maulānā treated any recently-arrived guest in such a special manner because he used to pay no attention whatsoever to even the wealthiest and most influential of people. The following occurred in Hadrat Wālā's presence: A very prominent chief was forcefully instructed to leave. The

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[1] Fruit of the jujube tree.

chief begged to be allowed to remain until the Jumuʿah salāh but he was not given permission.

On the other hand, his kindness to Hadrat Wālā increased to the point that when he was leaving the next morning, the Maulānā accompanied Hadrat Wālā to the place where he was staying, had his goods loaded on a pony and bid him farewell. The anger which he had displayed in the beginning was also out of extreme kindness because it was difficult to make arrangements for supper when Hadrat Wālā arrived at such a late hour. Hadrat Wālā requested him for duʿā's at the time of departure. The Maulānā replied: "I already made duʿā' for you." Hadrat Wālā asked him if there was anything he should read [as a spiritual practice]. He said: "You must read *Qul huwallāh…* (Sūrah al-Ikhlās) and *Sub-hānallāhi wa bi hamdihi* 200 times each daily." When Hadrat Wālā returned to Kānpūr, the people there did not allow him to go back to his hometown. Instead, a new madrasah by the name of Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm was established for him. Details in this regard were provided in a previous chapter.

Second Meeting

Hadrat Wālā went a second time after a few years. During this period, the Maulānā would occasionally convey salām to Hadrat Wālā via people who came to meet him. This was most strange for him because he rarely remembered anything. A reliable disciple of the Maulānā related to me that if a person requested him to make duʿā' that he wins a court case, the Maulānā would get up angrily and expel the person from the musjid. The same man would return after a short while, the Maulānā would have forgotten whatever transpired previously, and speak to the man in an affectionate manner. If he mentioned anything about the court case again, the Maulānā would expel him once again. The man would return after a short while and the Maulānā's anger would have subsided, and he would speak affectionately with him. This incident occurred several times. As far as I remember, it occurred in the presence of the one who narrated it to me.

For a personality who is so engrossed with himself to periodically convey salāms to Hadrat Wālā after having met the latter for such a short while clearly demonstrates his special affection towards Hadrat Wālā despite this being in the very early stages of Hadrat Wālā's life. The Maulānā was a man of

divine expositions, so he probably gauged Hadrat Wālā's present and future lofty status, and therefore accorded him with this type of attention.

Hadrat Wālā was accompanied by a few companions on his second trip to meet the Maulānā. It was during the month of Ramadān and the Madrasah was closed, so Hadrat Wālā stayed over. The companions knew that the Maulānā liked soap for washing clothes and tobacco as gifts. The Maulānā used to smoke the huqqah and have his clothes washed at home. This is why they brought tobacco and soap as gifts. On the other hand, Hadrat Wālā was not aware of the Maulānā's tastes. So he carried something which he himself liked, viz. Bengali *perā*[1] which was very beautifully made in Kānpūr, and had a good taste and beautiful fragrance. The Maulānā accepted the gifts of the others in a casual manner without expressing any special joy. But, contrary to expectation, he accepted Hadrat Wālā's gift very happily.

When the gift was presented to him, he remarked joyfully: "This is something of use to me, I make a drink out of it." He instructed his attendant to keep it in a safe place. He then turned to Hadrat Wālā and said: "Did you carry any medicine with you?" Hadrat Wālā had carried a bottle of pomegranate juice which he normally drank when opening his fast. He did not consider it to be a medicine, so he said: "Hadrat, I do not have any medicine with me." His friends whispered to him: "You brought your pomegranate juice." So Hadrat Wālā said to the Maulānā: "Hadrat, I do however have pomegranate juice." The Maulānā said: "You must have brought it for the time when you open your fast." Hadrat Wālā said: "Hadrat, I did bring it with that intention but my heart desires for Hadrat to accept it as a gift." He replied: "Very well." Hadrat Wālā presented it to him and he accepted it.

Hadrat Wālā was forever concerned about respect and consideration for the pious elders. He paid so much attention to their pleasure that when they neared Ganj Murādābād on this second trip, he thought to himself: "We do not have good deeds, and most pious elders can perceive the darkness of our hearts. This is the probable reason for the Maulānā scolding and reprimanding people. This is why we will have to purify

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[1] A type of sweetmeat made with a ball of dough.

and cleanse our hearts before presenting ourselves to him." He performed ablution, sought Allāh's forgiveness, and instead of continuing on his conveyance, he proceeded on foot until he presented himself before the Maulānā.

On the way they met an old man who was also going to meet the Maulānā. It was afternoon, summer time and the old man was fasting because it was Ramadān. Hadrat Wālā and his companions were also fasting. The old man went forward to meet the Maulānā. He asked the old man: "Are you fasting?" He replied: "Yes." The Maulānā became extremely angry and said: "Who asked you to keep fast while you are travelling and that too in such intense heat?" He added: "You must leave right now." Hadrat Wālā feared the same question being posed to them, and so it was. He asked: "Are you fasting?" Although Hadrat Wālā feared he would be reprimanded, he spoke the truth and said: "Yes Hadrat, I am fasting." Instead of becoming angry, he expressed happiness and said: "You did very well. You are a young man and it is most appropriate for you to fast."

The Maulānā displayed more affection than the previous occasion and also related some of his secrets to Hadrat Wālā. The following were some of the things which he said:

1. "It is not something for me to say, but I am saying it to you. When I go into prostration I feel as if Allāh has kissed me."
2. "Brother, there is no doubt about the enjoyment of Paradise and the enjoyment of drinking from the Haud-e-Kauthar (the fountain of abundance in Paradise). But the enjoyment in salāh is unequalled."
3. "Brother, I will only perform salāh in my grave. I make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to give me permission to remain fully occupied in salāh in my grave."

He was relating matters of this nature to Hadrat Wālā when a person came in. The Maulānā scolded him for entering without permission and not looking whether he was engaged in a private conversation or not. This also proves his special attachment to Hadrat Wālā. He then asked him where he would like to stay, in the musjid or in the house? Hadrat Wālā said: "Hadrat, I would like to stay where I can be closest to you." He said: "You may stay in the musjid."

Various types of exotic foods used to be presented to them at the time of breaking fast and also for the pre-dawn meal. It seemed as if he was hosting very honourable guests. This demonstrated his special consideration because he was generally very simple and carefree; there was no room for formalities. When Hadrat Wālā asked his permission to depart after one or two days, he said: "What is the hurry? It is the Madrasah holidays at the moment. Stay longer." Hadrat Wālā considered this to be a great boon because the Maulānā rarely asked anyone to stay over. He therefore deferred his intention of returning and remained there. Since he decided to stay for longer, he sought the Maulānā's permission to read *Hisn Hasīn* to him. He accepted happily and used to provide some explanations in the course of reading this book. At one point, he came to the words

شوقا إلى لقائك

The Maulānā asked: "What is the translation of *shauq*?" Instead of translating it himself, Hadrat Wālā asked him respectfully: "Hadrat should rather teach it to me." He said: "It translates as 'restlessness'." In the course of teaching, he would sing some of the words out of enthusiasm and yearning.

Hadrat Wālā continued receiving the various exotic foods. When Hadrat Wālā completed *Hisn Hasīn* and was getting ready to leave, he said: "Hadrat! Give me permission to narrate Hadīth as well." He replied: "Yes, you have my permission." He added: "You must come again." But Hadrat Wālā never got the opportunity to go to him again.

When Hadrat Wālā intended leaving for Makkah Mu'azzamah in order to remain in the service of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*, he wrote a letter to the Maulānā saying: "Make du'ā' Allāh *ta'ālā* makes me successful in the objective for which I am going." The Maulānā replied in one corner of the same letter:

> From Fadl Rahmān. Peace be to you. I pray for your goodness.

It becomes vividly clear from all the above incidents and interactions that the Maulānā had a special an affectionate gaze on Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Muhammadī Shāh

There was a pious personality in Allāhābād by the name of Hadrat Muhammadī Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Wālā was overcome by a real yearning to meet him so he decided to go there. Coincidentally, Hadrat Wālā's father went to Allāhābād and fell ill. When Hadrat Wālā learnt of it, he left Kānpūr for Allāhābād with the intention of serving him and tending to his needs. Hadrat Wālā's father loved him immensely so he was overjoyed at seeing Hadrat Wālā in Allāhābād. Although it was difficult for him to get up, he took Hadrat Wālā to the market from where he bought guavas which were considered to be prized gifts of Allāhābād. Hadrat Wālā's father recovered gradually in his presence and took him to meet Hadrat Muhammadī Shāh Sāhib. He said: "This is my eldest son who qualified in Deoband. He wrote a *Mathnawī* in Persian." Shāh Sāhib heard a few couplets from Hadrat Wālā's *Mathnawī, Zer-o-Bumm*. After hearing them, he made du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to turn the words into action.

Shāh Sāhib was generally lax on issues and rulings regarding which there were differences of opinion. But because he was a Sufi, he did not dispute with those who exercised caution. He believed in making peace with everyone. Because he did not look up to those who disputed on such issues, he disapprovingly asked Hadrat Wālā to translate the following verse:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوْهُ فَلَا يُنَازِعَنَّكَ فِي الْأَمْرِ

For every nation We appointed a way of worship which they observe. They should therefore not dispute with you in that matter.[1]

Hadrat Wālā responded immediately: "Allāh *ta'ālā* did not say:

فلا تنازعهم

He said: "Those who are on falsehood should not dispute with those who are on the truth. The people on the truth are not prohibited from disputing with those on falsehood. It is the duty of those on truth to oppose those who are on falsehood."

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[1] Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 67.

Instead of being displeased by this reply, Shāh Sāhib was most pleased and made du'ā' for Hadrat Wālā.

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "All praise is due to Allāh, I never blundered before anyone in expressing the truth. At the same time, I was not disrespectful before anyone." Whenever he engaged anyone on disputed issues and rulings, he conversed with utmost politeness and expressed the truth in such a soft manner that his addressee never felt insulted. And if he possessed the slightest justice, he would feel compelled to accept the truth. The following incident demonstrates this point.

Hadrat Hāfiz Sirāj al-Yaqīn

Maulānā Sādiq al-Yaqīn Sāhib was a student of Hadrat Wālā, a disciple of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* and a khalīfah of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. An intense ill-feeling resulted between him and his father, Hadrat Hāfiz Sirāj al-Yaqīn Sāhib, who was a prominent *sajjādah nashīn*[1] in Kursī. The ill-feeling was caused because of differences in creed which existed between father and son, and which eventually resulted in severing of all ties between the two. But Hadrat Wālā wrote to him in a very polite and soft style, and explained the issues to him in a manner which softened his approach and resulted in reconciliation between father and son. Even Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* was very pleased with the results.

On one occasion, the father addressed another person in Hadrat Wālā's presence and said: "It was because of him that we are reconciled." Although he was of a different school from Hadrat Wālā's, he was so impressed by him that just through a short conversation with him, he gave up the innovation of covering graves with sheets. Moreover, he differed severely on a particular issue with a scholar who belonged to his own creed. He pointed towards Hadrat Wālā and said: "He is here. Any scholar in the whole of India can engage him. I do not consider any scholar to be his equal." He said this despite Hadrat Wālā's disapproval. He was so overcome with love for Hadrat Wālā that he gave up a life-long practice all at once. This was no small feat. This notwithstanding the fact that he started the

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[1] A spiritual elder attached to a religious endowment.

practice of placing sheets on graves later on because of a dream which he had. Hadrat Wālā went to Kursī with Maulānā Sādiq al-Yaqīn Sāhib to visit him.

Hadrat Shāh Abd al-Latīf

Although Hadrat Shāh ʿAbd al-Latīf Sāhib held different beliefs, Hadrat Wālā travelled to Sathan to visit him. He was an abstinent person who used to come quite often to Kānpūr to visit Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Shāh Muhammad Sher Khān

Hadrat Wālā happened to attend a wedding in Pīlī Bhīt so he went to visit the famous Sufi of this place, Hadrat Shāh Muhammad Sher Khān Sāhib. Hadrat Wālā requested him to make duʿā' that Allāh's love develops in his heart. Hadrat Shāh Sāhib said to him: "If you want that to happen, you should at least rub your hands together." Hadrat Wālā immediately carried out his order and rubbed his hands together. When he finished, Hadrat Shāh Sāhib asked him: "Do you feel any heat?" He replied in the affirmative. Hadrat Shāh Sāhib said: "You must rub your heart in the same way, inshā Allāh, the heat of Allāh's love will be created."

Hadrat Hāfiz Abd ar-Rahmān Murādābādī

Hadrat Hāfiz ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib Murādābādī was a khalīfah of Tawakkul Shāh Sāhib. He loved Hadrat Wālā dearly and had a lot of confidence in him. In fact, he went to the extent of having his wife to pledge allegiance to Hadrat Wālā. On one occasion he came to Thānah Bhawan to meet Hadrat Wālā. I was present at the time.

Hadrat Shāh Abū Ahmad Bhopālī

Hadrat Wālā met him for the first time in Kānpūr. Later on Hadrat Wālā went to Bhopal so he went to his house to meet him but he was sleeping at the time. Hadrat Wālā waited. When he woke up, his attendants informed him of Hadrat Wālā's arrival. He became quite angry at them for not waking him up. Hadrat Wālā said: "There is nothing to worry about. I was sitting comfortably." He said: "But they should have at least woken me up." He received Hadrat Wālā with much warmth and affection.

Hadrat Bahādur Alī Shāh

There was a pious elder by the name of Hadrat Bahādur ʿAlī Shāh Sāhib in Deoband. Although he was totally illiterate, he was of such a high level that even Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to go very often to meet him. Hadrat Wālā was also in the habit of going to meet him. He used to receive Hadrat Wālā with real love and offer him tea.

Mullāh Shihāb ad-Dīn Majdhūb

During Hadrat Wālā's student days, there were two well known *majdhūbs* in Deoband, viz. Hadrat Mullā Shihāb ad-Dīn Sāhib and Hadrat Ghesan Shāh Sāhib. Mullā Sāhib supported a false group on a conceptual matter. But when Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib and his students used to go to him and ask him to curse that group, he would not become angry at them. Instead, he would say: "May Allāh do them good." Hadrat Wālā used to meet him quite often because Mullā Sāhib had been given permission to live in Chattah Musjid where Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib himself used to stay; and Hadrat Wālā had to go there regularly.

Hadrat Ghesan Shāh Majdhūb

Ghesan Shāh Sāhib was a very old man whose eyelashes and eyebrows had turned grey, and who had a very regal white beard. He used to live in a place which was inhabited by prostitutes, and would occasionally venture out into an orchard. On one occasion Hadrat Wālā heard that he is in the orchard at present, so he took a few students with him and went to meet him. But when they reached there, they learnt that he had already returned to his house. Since other students were with him, Hadrat Wālā got the courage and thought to himself that since they could not meet him here, they should go to his house to meet him. Hadrat Wālā had been wanting to meet him since quite some time. They met him in the upper storey of the house, presented some sweetmeats and requested him to pray for them. Shāh Sāhib started off by rendering a lengthy text which they could not understand. They could only catch the ending rhyming words of each stanza. Hadrat Wālā and the students continued listening and left him when he stopped after a long while. Hadrat Wālā could meet him only on this one occasion because he did not

consider it appropriate to go to his house repeatedly because of the type of women who also lived in the same building.

Hadrat Pīr Ahmad

Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib Majdhūb Pānīpattī through whose du'ā' Hadrat Wālā was born was mentioned in a previous chapter. He was a high ranking majdhūb who was recognized by the spiritual masters of the time and also praised regularly by Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He had a son by the name of Hadrat Pīr Ahmad Sāhib who was a man of divine expositions and spiritual ecstasies. He used to come to Thānah Bhawan quite often to meet his followers. He loved Hadrat Wālā dearly and would make it a point of going to meet him whenever he came to Thānah Bhawan. If Hadrat Wālā heard of his arrival, he too would make sure of going to meet him. On one occasion, he left from wherever he was in Thānah Bhawan to go and meet Hadrat Wālā. In the meantime, Hadrat Wālā also left to meet him. On the way he received divine inspiration and turned back saying: "He is on his way to see me."

Hadrat Khalīl Pāshā

There was a famous Sufi in Makkah Mu'azzamah by the name of Hadrat Khalīl Pāshā. Most of the 'ulamā' who went for hajj would make it a point of going to meet him. But Hadrat Wālā considered it contradictory to his unity of purpose to go to another shaykh in the presence of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, so he did not go to meet him. One night he dreamt someone addressing him: "You did not go to meet Khalīl Pāshā?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is no need to go because his example is similar to how people come for hajj. Their goal is the Ka'bah, and there are various routes to it. Some people come through Mumbai, others through Karachi. In the same way, Allāh is the objective, and the spiritual masters are the different routes. Since I have taken Hadrat Hājī Sāhib as my shaykh for the way, there is no need to go to any other shaykh. He is enough for the attainment of my objective." The person who addressed him fell silent.

Hadrat Wālā related his dream to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib said: "What harm is there? He is a pious man, you may visit him." When Hadrat Wālā went to meet him, he said: "I do not know Urdu. I can speak Arabic, Persian and Turkish. You may speak to me in any of these languages." Hadrat Wālā

said: “I do not know Turkish at all, but I do know Arabic and Persian. I understand Arabic, but cannot converse fluently in it. I can speak Persian and also understand it.” So they had a conversation in Persian. He spoke very highly of Indian ‘ulamā’ in the course of his conversation, and said that they have no greed for this world and are very Allāh-conscious. Hadrat Wālā asked: “Which Indian ‘ulamā’ did you meet?” He replied: “[Maulānā] Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib and Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib.” Hadrat Wālā thought to himself: “Why then would he not speak highly of Indian ‘ulamā’?”

I say: Based on the circumstances and subject matter of this meeting, it becomes clear that he was impressed by Hadrat Wālā as well. This is why his mind went to praising Indian ‘ulamā’.

Hadrat Sufi Shāh Sulaymān Lājpūrī

When Hadrat Wālā travelled to Rander, Hadrat Sufi Shāh Sulayman Sāhib Lājpūrī met him several times either coincidentally or by coming specifically to meet him. He was a well-known Sufi of the region[1] and was quite aged. According to a Surtī friend, he was almost 100 years old. He met Hadrat Wālā with great affection. I think it was most probably in Surat when he came to leave Hadrat Wālā in a conveyance for quite a distance.

A Surtī friend relates something which he saw with his own eyes: Hadrat Wālā was proceeding from Rander to Surat while the Sufi Sāhib was going from Surat to Rander. There was a bridge on the way. The Sufi Sāhib got off his vehicle and met Hadrat Wālā who was seated in his car. When the Sufi Sāhib reached Rander, he went to a musjid and continued crying for a long while. When someone asked him the reason, he mentioned Hadrat Wālā’s name and said: “I do not know what he did to me with his eyes.” When Hadrat Wālā heard this, he said: “It was actually his love and humility. Despite being such a respected elder, he said this without hesitation to his disciples.”

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[1] Rander used to be a village outside the Gujarat city of Surat but is now a suburb of the city.

Hadrat Qārī Abd ar-Rahmān Pānīpattī

Hadrat Qārī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Pānīpattī happened to pass by when Hadrat Wālā was in Kānpūr. When he heard of his expected arrival, he went to the station to meet him. Hadrat Wālā read the forty Hadīth of Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh *rahimahullāh* to him and received a chain of transmission from him. In this way, in addition to having the honour of meeting him, he could proudly claim to be his student.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Alī Maungerī

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad ʿAlī Maungerī *rahimahullāh* was a senior khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and an ex-rector of Nadwatul ʿUlamā'. He loved Hadrat Wālā dearly and had a special bond with him. The Maulānā was also in Kānpūr during the days when Hadrat Wālā was teaching there. The Maulānā lived in Kānpūr for a long period of time and then settled down permanently in Maunger where he established the Khānqāh Rahmānī.

Maulānā Nadhīr Husayn Dehlawī

Based on the fact that Hadrat Wālā was certainly not fanatical, he met Maulānā Nadhīr Husayn Sāhib Dehlawī *rahimahullāh*, a very senior scholar of the Ahl al-Hadīth, on two occasions. The first time he met him was during his student days when Hadrat Wālā happened to be in Delhi. He asked Hadrat Wālā: "What is your purpose of coming here?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "I came to meet you. I am studying in Deoband." The Maulānā asked: "Where are you staying at present?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "At a relative's place." He said with genuine kindness: "I have a complaint against you – you have come to meet me yet you are staying somewhere else? [You ought to come and stay here]."

A Ghayr Muqallid student was studying in Deoband during those days. He had made some derogatory statements against Hadrat Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* so a few students hit him. The Maulānā mentioned this incident to Hadrat Wālā and complained about it. Hadrat Wālā said: "You heard of the incident but do you know the reason behind it?" He expressed his ignorance. Hadrat Wālā said: "He had made derogatory statements against Hadrat Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* so a few students got angry at him." When the Maulānā heard this, he said: "It was certainly an improper action on his part."

The second time Hadrat Wālā met him was when he was on a journey and had stopped over in Ārah. The Maulānā happened to come there coincidentally. Hadrat Wālā went to meet him. A zealous Ghayr Muqallid who was seated near him made some unsavoury comments against Hadrat Ibn Humām *rahimahullāh*. The Maulānā reprimanded him saying: "They were great people. We do not have the courage to say anything against them." When relating these incidents, Hadrat Wālā said: "The Ghayr Muqallids ought to learn a lesson from the Maulānā's statements."

At this point, I recall a dream which Hadrat Wālā had seen during his student days. He and some students had assembled on Maulānā Nadhīr Husayn's porch and buttermilk was being distributed. Although Hadrat Wālā had an intense natural liking for buttermilk, he refused the buttermilk which was being distributed there. The interpretation of this dream came immediately into Hadrat Wālā's mind as follows: This group [Ghayr Muqallids] only has the external form of Dīn and not its essence. They are like buttermilk, although it looks like milk, it does not have any butter in it. Dīn and knowledge of Dīn are symbolically compared to milk, as is supported by Ahādīth in this regard. In this dream, instead of milk being distributed, buttermilk was distributed. Although it appears like milk, the essence of milk – butter – has been separated from it.

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to the Ahl al-Hadīth: "If they refrain from evil thoughts and defamatory statements, we could say that this is also one way of the past scholars although the latter scholars differ with them in this regard." He also said: "I have several Ghayr Muqallids who pledged bay'ah to me. I am not too strict in this regard and accept their bay'ah provided they consider taqlīd to be permissible. They may not consider it to be wājib, but they must not consider it to be a sin. However, their hearts do not receive what they ought to be receiving despite focusing on their hearts. There is no doubt in their piety but it is not on the level of adoration because these people generally lack respect. They are by and large impudent and attach very little importance to piety. This results in a type of contraction."

Hadrat Hāfiz Tafaddul Husayn

He was a resident of Bighar, district Muzaffar Nagar and had pledged allegiance to Hadrat Maulānā Muzaffar Husayn Sāhib

Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh*. He was well-known in this region and Hadrat Wālā had several opportunities of meeting him. Hadrat Wālā says: "He was a very good person who was straightforward and frank. He loved me a lot."

Hadrat Hāfiz Ahmad Husayn Shāh Jahānpūrī

Although he was a senior chief of Shāh Jahānpūr, he was a pious Sufi who showed much affection to Hadrat Wālā. He cursed a person on one occasion and the man died immediately. Instead of gloating over this supernatural feat of his, he became scared and wrote to Hadrat Wālā thus: "Have I committed the crime of murder?" Hadrat Wālā provided a detailed reply which put him at complete ease.

The gist of the reply was: If you have the power to exercise your will and resorted to this power at the time when you cursed him – i.e. you thought it wilfully and with your power that this man must die – then you committed murder. Since this is not a wilful murder [but similar to a wilful murder], it is compulsory on you to pay blood money and atonement. But if this is not the case, you did not commit murder. However, we will have to see the nature of the curse and what the curse actually was. Furthermore, we will have to see if you had a Sharʿī right to utter such a curse. If you had such a right, then even the sin of cursing is not on you.

In short, Hadrat Wālā wrote a detailed answer in which he delved into all the fine points and provided a different ruling for each of those points. Hadrat Wālā relates: "This was the only question of this nature which I received in my entire life. It proves how particular he was about piety." He held certain views on a few subsidiary matters which were different from those of Hadrat Wālā.

By Allāh's grace, Hadrat Wālā was an erudite scholar of the highest level. He therefore maintained subsidiary differences within the limits of the Sharīʿah. He says: "All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I do not develop any misconception about any Sufi on the basis of subsidiary differences. This is on condition the effects of piety are overwhelming in him. I always have good thoughts about those who engage in Allāh's remembrance even if they are committing certain mistakes. But this does not mean that their actions and statements must be validated with the Sharīʿah. Instead, I find an explanation for the statements

and actions of those Sufis who are overpowered by their conditions. I feel they are excused because of this overpowering. And if it is with regard to matters which are open to interpretation, then the scope for such interpretation prevents me from having any ill thoughts about them. Although Hadrat Qādī Thanā'ullāh Sāhib Pānī Pattī *rahimahullāh* was a Naqshbandī, he took due consideration of the other Sufi orders and said in *Irshād at-Tālibīn*:

Apart from this, the additions (bidʻāt) that have come into Sufism is an error in discretion. Furthermore, the mujtahid is excused and receives one reward. If this principle is not adopted, then not only are the jurists unsafe, rather the entire world will be in severe constraints.

I recall one of Hadrat Wālā's statements at this point. He said: "An erudite scholar must be strict when it comes to his own actions, but soft for others." I constantly observe this policy in Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Shāh Ihsān al-Haq

There was a famous and trustworthy Sufi by the name of Hadrat Shāh Ghulām Rasūl Sāhib *rahimahullāh* in Kānpūr. He was given the title of Rasūl Numā because he had the power to enable a person to see Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʻalayhi wa sallam* in his wakefulness. His son, Hadrat Shāh Ihsān al-Haq Sāhib, was living in Kānpūr at the same time when Hadrat Wālā was teaching there. He too was a pious Sufi. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad ʻAlī Sāhib Maungerī *rahimahullāh* related a statement of his mentor, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, to Hadrat Wālā. He said: "There is blessing in Shāh Ihsān al-Haq's heart; you must go to meet him occasionally." Hadrat Wālā used to go to visit him now and then, and he used to receive Hadrat Wālā with genuine affection and consideration.

Hadrat Abd al-Wahhāb Baghdādī

When Hadrat Wālā was in Makkah Muʻazzamah, he went to meet another personality by the name of ʻAbd al-Wahhāb Baghdādī. According to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisah sirruhu* he was a man of divine expositions. He related one of his expositions in the assembly of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. He said: "One night I dreamt that Hadrat Imām Mahdī *ʻalayhis salām*

was performing tahajjud salāh at this very moment on the Mālikī Musallā. When I got up and went to verify this, I saw that Hadrat Imām Mahdī was certainly performing salāh there. I then pledged allegiance to him.”

When ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Baghdādī related this and left from the assembly, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib addressed those who were present: “He is a senior man of divine expositions.” When Hadrat Wālā heard this, he got up and caught up with him on the way. He shook hands with him and said: “Accept my allegiance on behalf of Hadrat Imām [Mahdī] because I do not know whether I will be living at the time when he makes his appearance, and I might be deprived of this opportunity.” He accepted Hadrat Wālā’s pledge.

Hadrat Wālā said: “He [‘Abd al-Wahhāb Baghdādī] either erred in his exposition or the person whom he saw performing salāh on the Mālikī Musallā mistakenly considered himself to be Imām Mahdī. There are some Sufis who were deceived into assuming that they were Imām Mahdī. I personally saw such people who were extremely pious and religious but were deceived into thinking that they were Imām Mahdī. There was a pious man in Meerut who was also deceived in this way. He used to say: “All the birds are informing me that I am Mahdī; why should I not believe them?”

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Abul Hasan

He was a former principal of Jāmi‘ Musjid Sahāranpūr. He was a khalīfah of Shāh ‘Abd ar-Rahīm Sāhib Sarsāwī who in turn was a khalīfah of Hadrat Shāh Ākhūn Sāhib Wilāyatī *rahimahullāh*. He was a Sufi who liked solitude. He would only leave his house to go to the Musjid where he would carry out certain tasks which pertained to his duties as the principal, and then return home. Together with being a Sufi, he was a scholar who saw to the affairs of the Musjid and would deliver the Friday lectures there. Hadrat Wālā’s younger brother, Munshī Akbar ‘Alī, was employed in Sahāranpūr for some time. When Hadrat Wālā used to go to Sahāranpūr, he would make it a point to visit Hadrat Shāh Abul Hasan who used to receive Hadrat Wālā with special attention, love and affection. He used to have lengthy discussions with Hadrat Wālā, not on worldly affairs but on the lives of the Sufis and other issues related to Sufism. He used to discuss these issues with real passion.

Hadrat Shāh Abd ar-Rahīm

Hadrat Shāh ʿAbd ar-Rahīm Sarsāwī was the former shaykh of Hadrat Shāh ʿAbd ar-Rahīm Sāhib Raipūrī. The former loved Hadrat Wālā dearly. Hadrat Wālā went to visit him in Sahārānpūr and requested his duʿā'. He made the following duʿā': "May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you rich in your body, and a dervish in your heart." By Allāh's grace, this is exactly how Hadrat Wālā is and we pray to Him to maintain him in this way. Āmīn.

Sā'ī Tawakkul Shāh

In the course of one of his journeys with Hadrat Maulānā Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib [former principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband], Hadrat Wālā had an opportunity of visiting Sā'ī Tawakkul Shāh Sāhib Anbālwī. Hadrat Wālā occasionally relates some of the points which he heard from him. For example, Shāh Sāhib took an oath and said to me: "When I engage in Allāh' remembrance my mouth becomes sweet as though I have just eaten some sweetmeats."

Hadrat Maulānā Ghulām Muhammad, Hadrat Maulānā Tāj Mahmūd And Hadrat Pīr Jhandā

In the course of one of Hadrat Wālā's journeys, a Sindhī Maulānā took Hadrat Wālā to meet Hadrat Maulānā Ghulām Muhammad Sāhib Dinpūrī, Hadrat Maulānā Tāj Mahmūd Sāhib Amrautī and Hadrat Pīr Jhandā Sāhib all of whom were well known spiritual masters of Sindh. They accorded a lot of respect to Hadrat Wālā. Maulānā Ghulām Muhammad Sāhib and especially Maulānā Tāj Mahmūd Sāhib joined him on a journey. Pīr Jhandā Sāhib gave a valuable robe to Hadrat Wālā and made the following bequest to his disciples: "When you experience the need to find out about any matter or if you have any mutual differences over any issue, you must refer it to Maulānā [Hadrat Wālā]."

Maulānā Tāj Mahmūd Sāhib's opinion about Hadrat Wālā can be gauged from one of his disciples' letter which Hadrat Wālā received on 27 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1353 A.H. He writes: "I had pledged allegiance at the hands of Hadrat Maulānā Tāj Mahmūd Sāhib Amrautī *rahimahullāh*. I clearly recall his words exactly as he said them. He said: 'Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib is on the truth. Love for him entails love for Allāh *taʿālā*.'

Since Hadrat Wālā is the Hakīm al-Ummat, I request you to make duʿā' for me…" written by Ghulām Husayn, Head Master Chākyān School, Shehzād Kaut, district Lārkāna, Sindh.

Maulānā Muhammad Ādil Kānpūrī

Although he had differences with Hadrat Wālā on certain subsidiary issues, he accorded a lot of consideration to Hadrat Wālā and loved him a lot.

Famous Sufis Of Lucknow

Hadrat Wālā visited some of the famous Sufis of Lucknow, e.g. Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib Firangī Mahallī, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Naʿīm Sāhib Firangī Mahallī and Hadrat Maulānā ʿAyn al-Qudāt Sāhib *rahimahumullāh*. They all accorded special attention to Hadrat Wālā. The last of these personalities changed his views on certain subsidiary issues.

Hadrat Wālā's Attitude To Contentious Issues

One thing becomes very clear from all the above incidents, viz. Hadrat Wālā's total absence of fanaticism and his absolute faith in the pious elders of Dīn. As for disputed issues, although he was extremely cautious in his own creed, he was exceptionally open-minded with others and always had good thoughts about them. Maulwī Ahmad Radā Khān Sāhib Barelwī was severely opposed to those on the truth, and his opposition to Hadrat Wālā was well-known. Despite this, Hadrat Wālā goes to great extent in defending him against those who speak ill of him and emphatically says: "His opposition may probably be out of genuine love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and – Allāh forbid – he mistakenly considers us to be disrespectful of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*." Look at his level of forbearance, noble thoughts and attention to preserving the limits of the Sharīʿah, especially after a person has passed away because no one knows in what state he left this world.

His Opinion Of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān

Hadrat Wālā also says with regard to Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān: "Sir Sayyid was very concerned and worried about the material success of Muslims. It may well be that Allāh *taʿālā* showers His grace on him because of this concern." Hadrat Wālā often relates incidents in this regard and also some incidents which

portray Sir Sayyid's faith in some of our elders. Hadrat Wālā says: "Sir Sayyid's belief in the concept of Oneness of Allāh and Messenger-ship was very firm and unadulterated. This is what I gauged from his writings. As for some of his interpretations and analyses of the Qur'ān and Hadīth, it seems that they were done in that way so that the enemies of Islam may not be able to make objections against it. This, notwithstanding the fact that his approach was wrong. This is why I refer to him as an immature friend."

Overpowering Noble Thoughts

Hadrat Wālā relates incidents of major sinners and morally depraved people which prove their love for Dīn. After relating these incidents he says: "In the light of this, how can we speak ill of the person?" He also says in this regard: "You will find some qualities in flagrant sinners which are not found in even senior Sufis. We should therefore not scorn anyone." Hadrat Wālā is always conscious of his own insignificance and unimportance, and these qualities are displayed in whatever he says or does. A person who observes him closely will witness these qualities in him all the time. The above-related incidents which portray his noble thoughts stem from these very same qualities. The injunctions of the Sharīʿah also demand such qualities. Bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā fully understands the essence and limits of every injunction of the Sharīʿah, he is not narrow-minded. This is the mark of an erudite scholar – he treats every single thing according to its position. This is what is known as moderation on the straight path which – in these times of excesses and failings, and when people are generally transgressing the limits – Allāh *taʿālā* made absolutely clear to the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* through Hadrat Wālā. Allāh *taʿālā* completed His evidence in this way. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to continue deriving benefit from him. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills. Hadrat Wālā says time and again: "It is my constant endeavour to teach people the reality of Dīn. But they consider this to be harsh."

ATTENTION OF THE IMDĀDĪYYAH ELDERS

In the previous chapter we related Hadrat Wālā's visits to the Sufis and elders of the other spiritual lineages, the attention with which they received him and their kindness towards him. We now relate the kindness, attention, glad tidings, supplications and praises of the Imdādīyyah spiritual lineage.

Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī

The personality who deserves to top this list, whose attention and focus were directed at Hadrat Wālā, through whom Hadrat Wālā – by Allāh's grace – is established on this high level, who is the fountainhead of all Hadrat Wālā's blessings which are being enjoyed by the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the East and West, and through whose pure and purifying water a major portion of the Islamic world is irrigated is none other than Hadrat Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Shaykh al-ʿUlamā' wa al-Mashā'ikh Imām at-Tarīq Hājī Shāh Imdādullāh Sāhib Thānwī Muhājir Makkī *quddisa sirruhu*. Hadrat Wālā has the honour of having pledged allegiance to him.

What a blessed personality Hadrat Hājī Sāhib must have been because merely thinking of him and the slightest mention of him elicit special feelings of fulfilment and ecstasy in the soul. Hadrat Wālā says: "The slightest mention of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib produces such a feeling in my heart that I lose all my senses. Although those who are looking at me may not know it, I am certainly overcome by that condition and I can perceive it extremely well."

My heart really feels like relating Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's special attention and favours on Hadrat Wālā in this chapter, but consider it more appropriate to do it in a later chapter. I am therefore suppressing my feelings, restraining my pen and deferring them for a later chapter. I will now present examples of the focus and favours of other personalities of this spiritual family.

Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad

Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib Muhaddith Thānwī was a noted and erudite scholar, a high ranking Sufi and a Pīr

Bhāi of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. He was especially fond of Hadrat Wālā since the latter's childhood. A few incidents in this regard were related in the chapter on Hadrat Wālā's childhood. They are recounted briefly.

Hadrat Wālā was still very young when the Maulānā – by virtue of his spiritual foresight – said: "This boy will take my place after me." The Maulānā was extremely considerate of Hadrat Wālā. His consideration can be gauged from the following incident: There were some ill-feelings between the Maulānā and Hadrat Wālā's father over the ownership of some land. He wanted to send some betel-leaf to the Maulānā, so he sent it with Hadrat Wālā because it was most likely to be accepted if it was given to him by Hadrat Wālā. The Maulānā accepted it solely out of consideration for Hadrat Wālā. This demonstrates his intense affection for Hadrat Wālā. Even after he passed away, he addressed Hadrat Wālā in a dream: "Our focus is still on you exactly as it had been when we were alive."

Hadrat Wālā was about sixteen years old when the Maulānā passed away. He passed away in 1396 A.H. while Hadrat Wālā was born in 1380 A.H. The Maulānā was one of the greatest spiritual masters and scholars of his time, and one of the three who were referred to as the Aqtāb Thalāthah (three leading personalities) of that era. The other two were Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib and Hadrat Hāfiz Muhammad Dāmin Sāhib. These three were Pīr Bhāis who used to remain occupied in dhikr and contemplation in Khānqāh Imdādīyyah, and on account of which, this Khānqāh was given the title of Dukān-e-Maʿrifat (the shop for the recognition of Allāh) by the spiritual masters.

For a leading personality, scholar of the external and internal sciences and Sufi like Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib to show so much of attention and affection to Hadrat Wālā was a clear glad tiding of Hadrat Wālā's suitability which – by Allāh's grace – proved to be absolutely correct.

Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī

The world is fully aware of the scholarly erudition and perfect spirituality of Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu*. He was unanimously accepted as a Qutb al-Irshād. He was the most senior khalīfah of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. When Hadrat Wālā was a student at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, he had

requested him to accept his pledge of allegiance. But the Maulānā excused himself because he considered it inappropriate while a student is still studying, and superfluous to acquiring Islamic sciences. As far as H̱aḏrat Wālā remembers – because it happened a very long time ago – he then sent a request with the Maulānā to H̱aḏrat H̱ājī S̱āẖib to ask the Maulānā to accept his pledge of allegiance. But H̱aḏrat H̱ājī S̱āẖib himself inducted H̱aḏrat Wālā as his own disciple. Details in this regard will – inshā Allāh – be provided in a later chapter.

All we need to mention here is that H̱aḏrat Maulānā Gangohī *raẖimahullāh* showed particular attention and kindness to H̱aḏrat Wālā. Although he was far more senior to H̱aḏrat Wālā in every respect, he used to be extremely considerate of him. When H̱aḏrat Wālā had just settled down in Thānah Bhawan [after his departure from Kānpūr], he went to visit H̱aḏrat Maulānā. The latter got off from his bedstead and sat on the floor where everyone else was seated. H̱aḏrat Wālā was most embarrassed and said: "H̱aḏrat, I will not have the opportunity of visiting you very often. I will come as an attendant and you ought to treat me as an attendant [and nothing more]."

The Maulānā removed H̱aḏrat Wālā's embarrassment by saying: "I had been lying down for quite some time; that is why I got up and sat down." He bore H̱aḏrat Wālā's request in mind and did not change his position on future occasions when H̱aḏrat Wālā came to visit him. Despite this, he would unwittingly show due consideration to H̱aḏrat Wālā.

One of his attendants said to him: "H̱aḏrat, he [H̱aḏrat Wālā] considers himself to be an insignificant servant of yours and respects you as if you are his shaykh. Why do you show him so much of regard?" H̱aḏrat Maulānā Gangohī replied: "You may be blind, but I am not." This incident was related to H̱aḏrat Wālā by the very person who had asked the question.

Whenever H̱aḏrat Wālā used to present himself before H̱aḏrat Maulānā, he used to speak about H̱aḏrat H̱ājī S̱āẖib with real enthusiasm and fervour. He would say to H̱aḏrat Wālā: "Bhāi! When you arrive here, I come to life." Some people complained to H̱aḏrat Maulānā about some of H̱aḏrat Wālā's views on certain disputed issues. H̱aḏrat Maulānā said: "I do not want to hear any complaints against him because when he does

anything, he does it after considering it to be the truth. He does not do it out of personal motives."

On one occasion, Hadrat Maulānā – in all his humility – said with reference to Hadrat Wālā: "Brother! He ate the ripe fruit of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. (In other words, he acquired the blessings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib during the final days of his life). While we ate his unripe fruit. (In other words, we benefited from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib during his early days)." This incident is related in Story No. 450 of Hadrat Wālā's book, *Arwāh Thalāthah*, in slightly different words. Hadrat Wālā's commentary to it is also mentioned there. I consider it appropriate to quote the commentary here:

The one practising humility should not be misconstrued as the inferior one. Superior spiritual experiences should not be understood as superiority in rank.

Hadrat Wālā was delivering a lecture in Gangoh. If anyone went to meet Hadrat Maulānā at that time, he would say to the person: "A true scholar is delivering a lecture at the moment. Go there, why are you coming here to me?"

Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* considered interest [usury] in a Dār al-Harb to be permissible. This was in line with the famous opinion of Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. On the other hand, Hadrat Wālā used to issue a fatwā of caution in line with the opinion of Hadrat Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh*. This issue was discussed one Friday in Hadrat Maulānā's assembly. Hadrat Wālā was present in that assembly. Maulānā Muhammad Yahyā Sāhib[1] who was the special attendant of Hadrat Maulānā and was not aware of Hadrat Wālā's view on this issue pointed towards Hadrat Wālā and said to Hadrat Maulānā: "Hadrat, why don't you permit him to take the rupees which his father left in the bank?" Although Hadrat Maulānā held a different view from Hadrat Wālā's, he said: "Glory to Allāh! How can I stop anyone if he wants to act on caution?"

When Hadrat Wālā's father passed away in 1305 A.H., Hadrat Wālā noted a few questions about the inheritance and sent it to Hadrat Maulānā via a barber. Although the questions were

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[1] He is none other than the father of Shaykh al-Hadīth Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh*. (translator)

many and Hadrat Maulānā was suffering from inflammation of the eyes, he answered all the questions. He also wrote the reason for providing so concise answers: "I am suffering from inflammation of my eyes and I am writing these answers with my eyes closed."

Hadrat Wālā had asked Hadrat Maulānā's opinion with regard to the same inheritance: "What if I do not take the properties?" Hadrat Maulānā replied: "If you take them, you are fully entitled. If you do not take them, even then Allāh *taʿālā* will never cause you any concern about your sustenance." By Allāh's grace, this is exactly what happened.

Hadrat Wālā decided to undertake a second journey to the Hijāz with the intention of remaining in the service of his shaykh, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, for six months. At the exact time of departure, he sent a message to Hadrat Maulānā informing him of his preparations for the journey. Hadrat Maulānā sent a written reply in absolute humility: "When you reach there and present yourself before Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, you must remember me." He added this couplet:

> When you sit with the beloved and drink, you must
> think of your drinking friends.

Hadrat Maulānā used to be overjoyed whenever he used to hear about Hadrat Wālā's lectures and about his Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm in Thānah Bhawan. He used to say: "All this is very good, but I will be most happy when people who engage in Allāh's remembrance start assembling there." By Allāh's grace, this wish was also fulfilled. Hadrat Maulānā was so desirous of seekers assembling around Hadrat Wālā that he would even send some of his own disciples to Hadrat Wālā for the sake of their rectification.

There are many incidents in this regard which Hadrat Wālā takes delight in relating. But we are sufficing with the above for the sake of brevity. Some of these incidents will – inshā Allāh – be related in a later chapter.

Hadrat Wālā himself had a lot of faith and confidence in Hadrat Maulānā. Apart from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, he did not have such faith and confidence in anyone else. He constantly says: "I have not come across any Sufi who combines the internal and external as he does." He also says: "My confidence in others is based on proof and evidence. But this is not the case with

Maulānā. Even when I think of proofs, my mind refuses and says: 'The Maulānā is certainly a genuine Sufi, what is the need to search for proofs?' In fact, searching for evidence is disrespectful when applied to him." Hadrat Wālā adds: "I had taken permission from Hadrat Maulānā to ask him questions whenever I am faced with any objections pertaining to internal and external issues. But in my entire life I had only three or four occasions when I needed to ask him such questions. I experienced so much of blessings through these few answers that all my other objections and doubts were resolved. There was no need for me to pose any future questions to him."

On one occasion, Hadrat Wālā asked him about the reality of tawassul. The Maulānā's eye sight was fast disappearing at the time so he asked: "Who is the person who posed this question?" Hadrat Wālā gave his name. The Maulānā said: "It is strange that you are asking such a question." He fell silent after saying this and did not provide any answer. Hadrat Wālā considered it disrespectful to repeat the question. Hadrat Wālā relates: "After a lengthy period of time, Allāh *taʿālā* automatically cast the full reality of tawassul in my heart." Subsequently, Hadrat Wālā wrote a unique and scholarly booklet on this subject. He titled it *al-Idrāk wa at-Tawassul*.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Nānautwī

Hadrat Wālā had several opportunities of meeting Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Nānautwī *quddisa sirruhu* during his student days at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. But Hadrat Wālā was quite young at the time. Moreover, Hadrat Maulānā passed away within a year after Hadrat Wālā went there to study. He therefore did not get an opportunity of establishing a special bond with him. Nonetheless, I heard Hadrat Wālā relating some incidents which display the special attention which the Maulānā gave to Hadrat Wālā. Generally, special attention is given to a person who possesses special qualities.

The following incident serves as an example: Hadrat Maulānā Qāsim Sāhib asked Hadrat Wālā: "What books are you studying?" Hadrat Wālā felt completely awe-struck by him and forgot the names of the books which he was studying. Hadrat Maulānā then began speaking about other matters so that Hadrat Wālā may feel a bit comfortable and his awe for him may decrease. He then said: "Look, it is one thing to study and another to merely count. Studying on its own is insufficient,

there is also a need to count.” He followed this with an example: “There was a scholar who memorized *Hidāyah*. There was another scholar who had not memorized *Hidāyah* but studied it with full understanding. The two were discussing a certain ruling when the one who had memorized it said: “In which book is this ruling written?” The other one replied: “In *Hidāyah*.” The first one said: “No, it cannot be because I memorized the entire *Hidāyah* and this is not mentioned anywhere.” The other one said: “It is definitely from *Hidāyah*. If you have the book here I can show it to you.” A copy of *Hidāyah* was brought and he showed him an extract which was not in exactly the same words as their discussion but the ruling was certainly derived from this extract. After the second one explained it, the first one had to admit that it was definitely a ruling from *Hidāyah*. He said with utmost regret: “It is you who have really learnt *Hidāyah*. As for me, it is as if I did not even study it; what is the benefit of mere memorization?”

After relating this incident, Hadrat Maulānā said: “This is the difference between studying and counting.”

A traveller came to Deoband on one occasion. He was accompanied by his son who was a qārī. He had his son render a recitation of the Qur’ān in Chattah Musjid. Hadrat Maulānā was present among those who were listening to his recitation; and so was Hadrat Wālā. When the qārī completed his recitation, it was most probably Hadrat Maulānā who asked Hadrat Wālā to render a recitation as well. Hadrat Wālā carried out his instruction.

Janāb Mullā Mahmūd Sāhib Deobandī was one of Hadrat Wālā’s teachers. He had a very forbearing and tolerant disposition. One day, contrary to the norm, he became quite angry at a student and, in his anger, extended his hand to hit him. But the student ducked and Mullā Sāhib’s hand hit the ground. Instead of the student getting hurt, Mullā Sāhib got injured and the student was saved. When Mullā Sāhib tried to hit him a second time, the boy got up and ran. Mullā Sāhib took his shoe and flung it at the boy but it missed him. Incidentally, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib was nearby. When he heard the commotion, he came, called for Hadrat Wālā and asked him what had transpired. When Hadrat Wālā related the incident to him, he laughed profusely and said: “I always thought Mullā Sāhib had only three elements in

him - water, air and earth - and that the fourth element – fire – did not exist in him. But today I have come to realize that he also possesses the fourth element.”[1]

Due to his enthusiasm, Hadrat Wālā used to occasionally attend Hadrat Maulānā’s *Jalālayn* lessons. Hadrat Wālā relates: “His explanations used to be extremely intricate and I could not understand anything. Not understanding them at that time was understandable [because I was a young student]. Even now I do not understand his writings. I can understand a little at the beginning, but once he starts providing his proofs, brings in subsidiary points, interjectory sentences and so on, then I cannot understand anything. And I cannot bear the difficulty of reflecting and scrutinizing, so I am deprived from benefiting from his writings. I pacify myself by saying: ‘There are many other simple books for learning the essentials of Dīn, why are you bearing this difficulty?’ It is my habit not to bear too much trouble in trying to understand a particular subject. If I understand something through a casual reading, well and good. If not, I leave it. I practise on the saying:

إذا لم تستطع شيئا فدعه

If you do not understand a particular thing, leave it.

Moreover, by leaving aside the difficult path and choosing the easier one, I am practising on the following Hadīth:

ما خيّر صلى الله عليه وسلم في أمرين إلا اختار أيسرهما

Whenever Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam *had a choice between two matters, he would opt for the easier one.*

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya’qūb

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ya‘qūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was the most senior teacher at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. In addition to his outstanding teaching capabilities and expertise in the external sciences, he was a man of spiritual excellences, divine expositions, supernatural feats and an illustrious Sufi of his time. He was from among the senior khulafā’ of Hadrat Shaykh

[1] Muslim philosophers are of the opinion that all bodies in this world – mineral, plant or animal – are composed of four elements. These are known as *al-‘anāsir al-arba‘ah*. (Translator)

al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*. He was the most special of Hadrat Wālā's teachers, the most beloved and the most respected in his eyes. He used to give very special attention to Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Wālā himself had full confidence in him and loved him. When Hadrat Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* began conducting Hadīth lessons in Gangoh, many students went to study under him and they urged Hadrat Wālā to join them because they felt Hadrat Maulānā Yaʿqūb Sāhib stayed absent from classes quite often, although – when he did come to teach – he used to satisfy the students fully. Hadrat Wālā said to them: "Although I realize that the Hadīth lessons will be better there [in Gangoh], I consider it disloyal to leave my teacher Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib. I cannot leave him unless he himself says to me: 'My treasure of knowledge has now finished. I will not be able to teach you anything more.'" Hadrat Wālā had this quality of loyalty since childhood. When he was memorizing the Qur'ān, his father wanted to change his teacher for some reason, but Hadrat Wālā refused and said that he will study under none other than his present teacher. His father was compelled to retain his teacher.

In short, Hadrat Wālā had full confidence in Hadrat Maulānā and loved him dearly. Hadrat Maulānā too was most affectionate towards him.

Hadrat Maulānā had gauged Hadrat Wālā's Allāh-bestowed intelligence and enthusiasm. He would therefore explain intricate points and provide elaborate academic details in his presence. This is why Hadrat Wālā remembers many of Hadrat Maulānā's unique and rare statements to this day and takes real delight in quoting them.

Due to his special relationship with Hadrat Wālā, whenever Hadrat Maulānā was in real need, he would take a loan from Hadrat Wālā and pay it back when he received his salary. He had full confidence in Hadrat Wālā's capabilities and so, he used to delegate the task of issuing fatwās to him while he was still a student. He occasionally appointed Hadrat Wālā to be the imām for salāh. Hadrat Wālā still remembers one incident in this regard. He asked Hadrat Wālā to perform the zuhr salāh on a particular day. Hadrat Wālā excused himself by saying: "Hadrat, I have not performed the Sunnah salāh of zuhr as

yet.” He replied: “We are going to follow you in the fard salāh not in the Sunnah salāh!”

Hadrat Wālā also relates some incidents related to helping Hadrat Maulānā in issuing fatwās. One of those incidents is related here. On one occasion, he received a very lengthy question, and he too provided a very lengthy, detailed and fully-referenced reply. After completing it, he gave it to Maulānā to check. He read the entire question and answer, and placed his signature of approval on it. But at the same time, he said to Hadrat Wālā: “It seems you have a lot of time on your hands. I would like to see the time when heaps of letters will be placed before you and how you will provide such lengthy replies.”

Eventually this is exactly what happened. Heaps upon heaps of letters are before Hadrat Wālā on a daily basis. He provides extremely short replies but which are most comprehensive, absolutely sufficient and encompass all angles of the question.

Hadrat Maulānā gave the following glad tiding as an interpretation to a dream which Hadrat Wālā had seen: “Inshā Allāh the world will fall at your feet and follow you but you will not even turn your gaze towards it.” He interpreted another dream as follows: “Inshā Allāh you will acquire honour of Dīn and this world.” By Allāh’s grace, both glad tidings were materialized.

Hadrat Maulānā had given another glad tiding while in the company of a small group: “Inshā Allāh, you alone shall remain. The rest of the field will be empty.”

The background to the above statement was given in detail in a previous chapter. All praise is due to Allāh, this glad tiding also proved to be true. Hadrat Wālā was the noblest of the ‘ulamā’ no matter where he went.

Hadrat Maulānā Rafī’ ad-Dīn

Hadrat Maulānā Rafī‘ ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was the khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh ‘Abd al-Ghanī Sāhib Dehlawī Muhājir Madanī *rahimahullāh*. The latter was one of the teachers of our elders, Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*. Maulānā Rafī‘ ad-Dīn Sāhib was a principal at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband and most probably benefited from the company of Hadrat Shaykh al-‘Arab wa al-‘Ajam as well.

Although Hadrat Maulānā did not acquire the external sciences, he was a distinguished Sufi. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib said with regard to him: "The only difference between Maulānā Rafī' ad-Dīn Sāhib and Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī is that Maulānā Gangohī is an 'ālim while the former is not. As for their spiritual affiliation with Allāh *ta'ālā*, they are on the same level."

He possessed great organizational skills. He organized a graduation ceremony on one occasion. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "You are organizing such a huge gathering but I do not see the slightest worry and anxiety in you. You are making all the arrangements very calmly and peacefully, and all the work is being accomplished in an excellent manner." The Maulānā replied: "This is just a small gathering. If I were given the Sultanate – inshā Allāh – I would run it with the same ease, tranquillity and excellent manner."

Hadrat Wālā received special attention from the Maulānā. He was sitting on the foot-side of a bedstead with very little space remaining. When Hadrat Wālā, out of respect, went to sit on the foot-side, the Maulānā held his hand and tried to seat him on the head-side. Hadrat Wālā began excusing himself. The Maulānā said: "You ought to obey your elders. Respect demands that you sit where they seat you." Hadrat Wālā carried out his order and sat on the head-side despite feeling quite embarrassed.

It was probably on the same occasion when the Maulānā related the story of Dārā Shikwah and 'Ālamgīr. The story is as follows: Both of them took turns in going to a Sufi to request him to supplicate for the throne and crown in their favour. Dārā Shikwah reached first. He was quite extreme in his faith in the Sufis. When this Sufi asked him to sit in the place which was normally reserved for him, he – out of extreme respect – refused to sit although the Sufi persisted in asking him. Instead, he sat on the carpet which was laid out on the floor. When he requested the Sufi to pray in his favour so that he receives the throne, the Sufi said: "I was wanting to seat you on the throne but you refused." The Sufi refused to supplicate in his favour. Dārā Shikwah returned sorrowfully, but concealed this incident so that 'Ālamgīr does not come to know of it. 'Ālamgīr then presented himself before the Sufi. He requested him to sit in his place, and 'Ālamgīr went and sat down without

any hesitation. When he requested the Sufi to pray in his favour for the throne and crown, he replied: “You are already sitting on it. As for the crown, I have no control over it. That depends on a certain servant of yours. If he places a turban or hat on your head with his own hands, you will receive the crown as well.” ʿĀlamgīr said: “What! Is he of such a high level. Anyway, he is only a servant; it will not be difficult at all to get him to place a turban on my head. He will carry out my order immediately. How can he ever refuse?” The Sufi said: “Do not rely on that. He is not your servant, he is the king.”

When ʿĀlamgīr returned to his palace, he summoned the servant immediately and instructed him to bring water and to pour it for him while he performs ablution. When he completed his ablution, he instructed the servant: “My hands are wet. Pick up that turban and place it on my head.” The servant clasped his hands and said: “Sir, how can a person like me even touch your turban?” ʿĀlamgīr responded in an angry tone: “I am ordering you, you will have to do it.” The servant excused himself again. ʿĀlamgīr asked him several times, and he respectfully refused each time. ʿĀlamgīr was eventually forced to pick it up and place it on his head. He began cursing the Sufi for having humiliated him in this way. The moment ʿĀlamgīr placed the turban on his head, the servant said: “Sir, I now take your leave. This was my last service which I rendered to you. I cannot work here any longer.” ʿĀlamgīr said: “My mission has been accomplished. I cannot even take any service from you now. You may leave as you wish.”

I feel that it is not far-fetched to conclude from the incident of the Maulānā asking Hadrat Wālā to sit at the head-side and then relating the incident of ʿĀlamgīr that he was giving the glad tidings of religious distinction to Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Wālā used to join the Maulānā’s circle of attention and found it to be most effective. He felt as if he was pure and clean like an angel. Hāfiz ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib was a chief of Lāl Kurtī, Meerut, and a Pīr Bhāi of the Maulānā. (Hāfiz ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib knew Hadrat Wālā very well because Hadrat Wālā’s father was in-charge of the chiefdom of Meerut). Anyway, he came to visit the Maulānā in Deoband. He was astonished when he saw the appearance and dressing of Hadrat Wālā, and his studious nature. He remarked to

Maulānā Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib: "Hadrat, you have made the boys totally immersed in their shaykhs."

The Maulānā took Hadrat Wālā with him to Sirhind and took him to visit the grave of Hadrat Imām Rabbānī Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh*. On this journey, he also took him to Barās, Patyālah, where – according to an exposition experienced by certain elders – the graves of a few Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are situated.

The Maulānā also appointed Hadrat Wālā as an imām in his musjid. But then Hadrat Wālā felt it most disrespectful to be an imām while a senior personality like Maulānā follows him in the salāh. So in order to save himself from the Maulānā's insistence, he began performing his salāh in Chattah Musjid. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib used to lead the salāh here, while Hadrat Hājī Sayyid Muhammad ʿĀbid Sāhib used to lead it in his absence. But when Hadrat Wālā began performing his salāh here, Hājī Sāhib began asking him to lead the salāh in Maulānā Yaʿqūb's absence. Maulānā Yaʿqūb Sāhib himself would occasionally ask Hadrat Wālā to lead the salāh.

We can gauge from this incident that the elders considered Hadrat Wālā to be a very righteous person even during his student days. Hadrat Wālā's respect for them is also apparent.

Shaykh al-Hind Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan

Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh* was the illustrious student of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* and an exceptional khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He was from among Hadrat Wālā's special teachers under whom Hadrat Wālā studied many books during his student days in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. During those days, the Maulānā was a fourth level teacher and eventually progressed to a first level teacher.

His academic and practical achievements are well known and accepted. Some of these are related in Hadrat Wālā's book, *Dhikr Mahmūd*, which he wrote on the Maulānā's life. Although he was such a distinguished scholar, he addresses Hadrat Wālā in glowing terms in two letters which he wrote to him. These letters will be quoted soon. In the first letter he addresses him as: "An embodiment of virtue and perfection. May Allāh *taʿālā* honour you and place you above most people."

He addresses him in the second letter as: "A treasure house of virtues and blessings. May your shadow remain eternal."

Hadrat Wālā was hosting a graduation ceremony at Jāmi' al-'Ulūm Kānpūr and Hadrat Maulānā was asked to participate. Hadrat Wālā requested him to deliver a talk but he excused himself with absolute humility by saying: "This is totally inappropriate because it will cause your humiliation. The people will say: 'Look at his teacher!' And there is a possibility of the popularity which you enjoy not remaining the same. I therefore consider it unwise to deliver a talk." He only agreed after Hadrat Wālā persisted repeatedly.

The two had different opinions with regard to the political movements. Despite this, he maintained the affectionate relationship which he had with Hadrat Wālā. In fact, despite Hadrat Wālā's differences with him on this subject, the opposition's constant efforts to foment trouble and confusion between the two, and Hadrat Wālā remaining firm on his views; he praised Hadrat Wālā by saying: "I am proud and happy to say that those who are totally aloof from the present movements are also from among us."

This clearly shows that the Maulānā considered the issue to be open to different interpretations, if not he would have never spoken in praise of non-participation. This was also the reason why the Maulānā always defended Hadrat Wālā against those who made objections to his non-participation in the political movements. He constantly spoke in praise of Hadrat Wālā's good intentions and religious services, and stopped those who were short-sighted from levelling objections against Hadrat Wālā. In fact, on one occasion he said to a Pānīpattī scholar: "Brother! We do not like disputes within our own people. So let me do this, I will change my views a bit and agree with him [Hadrat Wālā] on this issue. After all, I have not received any divine revelation through which I could claim that my view is the correct one."

Hadrat Wālā too would always show utmost respect to the Maulānā and would present himself before him with absolute deference. He used to speak highly of the Maulānā's sincerity, selflessness, services to Islam and the Muslims, and his other academic and practical achievements. He used to take much delight in speaking about these aspects, and still does.

It becomes absolutely clear that these differences were based on independent interpretations. Apart from this, both personalities desired the wellbeing of Islam and Muslims. Differences on such interpretational matters between teacher and student have been the continued practice of the illustrious imāms of the past and the pious predecessors; and they are proofs of absolute integrity.

In short, the differences which existed between Hadrat Wālā and Hadrat Maulānā as regards political movements were based on total sincerity and solely for Allāh *taʿālā*. They were not based on personal motives like other claimants to leadership and authority.

We now quote a few extracts from *Dhikr Mahmūd* which would shed some light on the bond which existed between Hadrat Wālā and Hadrat Maulānā. Hadrat Wālā is speaking in the first person.

The first time I had an opportunity of meeting Hadrat was when I went to Deoband as a student. From among the various prescribed books, I was taught *Mullā Hasan* and *Mukhtasar Maʿānī* by the Maulānā. This was towards the end of 1295 A.H., i.e. in the month of Dhū al-Qaʿdah. The Maulānā was teacher number four at the time. Teacher number one was Hadrat Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib, teacher number two was Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Ahmad Sāhib, and teacher number three was Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Mahmūd Sāhib. May Allāh shower His mercy on them all.

I studied several books under the Maulānā right until I completed my studies. Apart from the previously-mentioned books, I clearly remember studying the following books under him: *Hamdullāh; Mīr Zāhid Risālah; Mīr Zāhid Mullā Jalāl;* several Hadīth books whose details are given in *Sabʿah Sayyārah*; and *Hidāyah Ākhirayn*. There are others which I could recall if I were to think about it carefully.

During my student days, I was very enthusiastic about debating with people from every creed. But now I detest it as much as I was enthusiastic about it previously. There was a time in Deoband when a string of Christian missionaries would come one after another and deliver speeches in the market places and bazaars. The moment I heard about the arrival of any of them, I would go and speak to them. On one occasion, a

senior priest who was a European arrived with a large entourage. They pitched a huge tent in the park next to the station. I, together with a few students, reached there and began conversing with them. Someone informed Hadrat Maulānā. Look at his high level of affection. He came personally to the park solely because he thought we were still young and inexperienced, and we might be intimidated by the missionaries. He came in, moved me aside, and engaged the priest. The priest asked Hadrat Maulānā his name. He said: "Nanhā." He thought the Maulānā must be some insignificant fellow, so he got ready to converse with him.

I clear remember that in the course of the discussion, the priest said that 'Īsā *'alayhis salām* is the word of Allāh. When Maulānā asked him to explain what it means, he could not explain it. The Maulānā jokingly listed to him the different categories of "words" and the sub-categories of those categories. Eventually the priest's Ma'am realized what was happening. She sent a note calling him aside. He considered it to be a lifesaver and retreated. We all returned happily to the Madrasah.

I received a letter from Hadrat Maulānā in which he addressed me by the titles "Makhdūm wa Mukarram" (respected and honourable). I was most embarrassed, expressed my embarrassment in a reply to him and requested him not to use such words for me. However, he used the same words in his next letter to me. I replied: "Since my request has not been fulfilled, I gauge that Hadrat's comfort lies in using those words even though they are embarrassing to me. I consider Hadrat's comfort to be more important than my own, so Hadrat may now use whatever words Hadrat wants to – I will bear them."

Hadrat's blessed letters

It is either due to my shortcoming or lack of courage that I had very few occasions to correspond with Hadrat. The few times which I did write to him and the replies which I received were not preserved by myself. At present, I can recall only three letters. One was his reply to a question which I had sent regarding tafsīr. This letter has been published towards the end of the fourth volume of *Fatāwā Imdādīyyah*. The reader can refer to it there. The other two contain minor themes. I am quoting them here for the sake of blessings. These letters are more than enough to prove Hadrat's humility and kindness.

An embodiment of virtue and perfection. May Allāh *taʿālā* honour you and place you above most people.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh

I experienced the urge to enquire about your wellbeing on several occasions, and also learnt about it verbally from people who came to visit me. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain you and all your associates on goodness. Presently I met a Bengali brother, ʿAbd al-Majīd, who is returning to India and intends visiting you.

I considered it to be an excellent opportunity to send this letter with him. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this servant and all his companions are very well and experiencing absolute peace. I came to Makkah Muʿazzamah in the beginning of Rajab and I am still here. I hope you will not forget to pray for the success and good death of this distant and miserable fellow. I cannot say anything about my future plans of where I am going to be staying. Kindly convey my salām to Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib, Maulwī Muhammad Zafar Sāhib, Maulwī ʿAbdullāh Sāhib and others.

I am most saddened by the demise of Maulānā Maulwī Muhammad Yahyā Sāhib and Maulānā Qamar ad-Dīn Sāhib. To Allāh we belong. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His blessings on them. Peace to you and to those who are with you.

That is all.
This servant, Mahmūd, *may Allāh pardon him.*

Convey my salām to Munshī Rafīq Ahmad Sāhib. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless his periodical with progress.

Makkah Muʿazzamah
12 Muharram, Wednesday.

□

A treasure house of virtues and blessings. May your shadow remain eternal.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

Your letter brought immense joy and gratitude to me. Whatever we are enjoying is a result of the prayers of respected and sincere people. May Allāh *taʿālā* perpetuate their blessings.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, my companions, associates and myself are well. Convey salām to all.

Peace to you and to those who are with you.

That is all.
This servant, Mahmūd, *may Allāh pardon him.*
Deoband.
2nd Shawwāl, Sunday.

An example of Hadrat's impartiality, defence of the truth and concern for Dīn can be gauged from the following incident. The chief of a town and an ʿālim who was of our thinking held a function to which I was invited, and so was Hadrat Maulānā and several other seniors. On reaching there, I gauged that no innovative customs were followed. And why should there be when the host himself was against innovations? However, an invitation had been extended to the entire tribe. I, based on my previous experience, considered this to be a custom of trying to outdo each other and one family showing off to the other. Those of our seniors who were overpowered by noble thoughts were a bit lenient in this regard [but I was not]. Consequently, based on our different approaches to the issue, I returned home without participating in the function while the other seniors participated in it.

There was quite an uproar among our own circles as regards my action. When someone asked me about our differences on the issue, I replied while giving full consideration to the respect which our seniors deserved. But the strange thing is that when Hadrat Maulānā was asked about it, then despite having no need whatsoever to show any consideration to my views, he gave a reply which accorded full consideration to my views. It is worth pondering over. He said: "The fact of the matter is that we do not have the knowledge which he [referring to myself] has with regard to the evils which are prevalent among the masses. This is why he exercised caution. As the Persian saying goes: "If I were to give my life for just this one point, it would be a worthy cause." Hadrat Maulānā's reply was related to me by some reliable people.

There is another story which portrays Hadrat's impartiality, defence of the truth and consideration. I will conclude *Dhikr Mahmūd* with it. When Hadrat Maulānā returned from Malta, he expressed certain specific views to a few special associates on some very special issues. He took a personal part in them because it was done solely out of sincerity and as a service to Islam and Muslims. The issues were independent judgements and open to interpretations. There is therefore a leeway for differences. Some aspects certainly contained elements of worldly and religious dangers and had to be abstained from according to the Sharī'ah.

Bearing in mind these dangers and harms, some 'ulamā' did not participate in these movements. I myself agreed with those who were of the view of non-participation. Many of those who went to extremes in their love, considered our non-participation to be a direct opposition to Hadrat. But look at Hadrat's own response to the situation. When I went to Deoband, I was accompanied by a friend from A'zam Garh who was also a student of Hadrat. He related to me: "I said to Hadrat: 'Ashraf is presently here in Deoband. If you were to discuss these issues with him, he will probably change his views and agree with your views.' Hadrat replied: 'No. That would be most improper. It is most inappropriate to discuss such issues with a person who respects me. Moreover, a person's views and opinions do not change through a mere discussion. They change through incidents and events." Allāhu Akbar! Look at his level of impartiality and consideration.

On the same subject, a person was present in Deoband when some people were complaining about me. Hadrat gave them a hearing and said: "I am most saddened that you are complaining to me about a person when I consider him to be …" (Hadrat Maulānā used some very laudable words which are far beyond my rank, and I am therefore not mentioning them here). He also said: "Do you think all my actions are done after receiving divine revelation? I have a certain view and he [referring to me] has his own unique view. Why should there be any objections and complaints about this?"

Some people wanted to bring Hadrat to Thānah Bhawan in order to strengthen these movements. When they forwarded their request to him, he replied: "He [referring to me] is present there. He will be discomforted if I were to go there. If I were to

agree with him, I will be going against my own views. And he would be embarrassed by my disagreement. I will therefore not go there."

He said on one occasion: "Why do you people constantly complain about him? He is also rendering services to the Dīn." Glory to Allāh! Allāh is the greatest! I address other groups by mentioning these excellent qualities of my elders and seniors to them. I then say to them:

أولئك آبائي فجئني بمثلهم – إذا جمعتنا يا جرير المجامع

O Jarīr! When you bring us together in large assemblies, then present to us people as great as my forefathers.

Hadrat Maulānā Fatah Muhammad Thānwī

He was a well-read scholar and a senior Sufi. He had first pledged allegiance to Hadrat Nawāb Qutb ad-Dīn Khān Sāhib Dehlawī *rahimahullāh*. When the latter passed away, he aligned himself to Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Thānwī Muhājir Makkī *quddisa sirruhu* and was conferred khilāfah by him.

He was Hadrat Wālā's first teacher. Hadrat Wālā studied the primary Persian and Arabic texts under him. He was a very religious, blessed and spiritually high personality who was extremely kind to his students. He undertook Hadrat Wālā's training and tutelage when Hadrat Wālā was very young and at the beginning stages of his student life – a time when his blessed heart was pure and clean from all marks and blemishes. The Maulānā therefore proved to be a key to blessings and good fortune, and he firmly embedded the love for Dīn in Hadrat Wālā's heart. It was as if these lessons were carved in stone. Hadrat Wālā relates with much joy and gratitude: "I acquired the fundamental capital of love for Dīn from the blessed company of Maulānā because he was an ardent lover of Dīn. Through the Maulānā's blessings, my desire for Dīn increased to such a level that I began performing tahajjud salāh when I still had not reached the age of maturity."

Maulānā had a very unassuming disposition, was very simple, and was physically very thin and short. Anyone looking at his external appearance could never guess he was of such a high rank. Hadrat Wālā took one of his honourable guests to meet

the Maulānā. The latter accorded a lot of respect to Hadrat Wālā. As Hadrat Wālā was returning with his guest just before sunset, the guest asked: "You were supposed to take me to meet your teacher. Why don't we go there now?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "That was my teacher whom we visited just now." The guest said in astonishment: "Was that really your teacher!? He did not even look like he was your student."

The Maulānā was very particular about piety. He came to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion and said: "When two people live together, it results in interactions between them. These interactions necessitate the fulfilment of certain rights. Sometimes, there are shortfalls in the fulfilment of those rights. I may have certainly failed in this regard in my interaction with you. I request your pardon."

Hadrat Wālā immediately realized that the Maulānā was making a subtle reference to the rare occasions when he had hit Hadrat Wālā when he was studying under him, and was seeking pardon for those occasions. Hadrat Wālā said: "Hadrat! I have fully understood what you are seeking pardon for. Hadrat! That was essentially your kindness and mercy. There is no question of seeking pardon for that. Whatever little I have learnt is through the blessings of that beating." The Maulānā said: "No. You must certainly pardon me. Hadrat Wālā excused himself several times but the Maulānā paid no heed. Hadrat Wālā was eventually forced to say: "I have pardoned you." Look at the Maulānā's level of caution and consideration!

The Maulānā always went on foot when travelling to the nearby towns and villages. One day he was going on foot to Gangoh. In the meantime, Hadrat Wālā also left for Gangoh on an ox-cart. On the way, he saw the Maulānā, so he got off from the ox-cart immediately and said: "Hadrat! There is enough place on the ox-cart, you too should get on." But he refused.

Instead of persisting, Hadrat Wālā also began walking with him and said: "Very well, I will not insist." The Maulānā said: "This is worse than insisting." He added: "I am in the habit of walking, while you will be inconvenienced by it. You should rather get on." Hadrat Wālā said: "Hadrat! How can I allow you to walk while I sit on the ox-cart? My sitting on the conveyance is dependent on you." The Maulānā had to sit on the ox-cart while Hadrat Wālā was able to get him to sit without insisting

on him. He was able to provide comfort to the Maulānā in this subtle way.

The Maulānā, due to his extreme humility and kindness, used to go often to meet H̲ad̲rat Wālā. He was an avid reader but got very little chance of reading because his eyesight had gone weak. On one occasion he ordered some new book which covered several large volumes. He loaded them personally and brought them to H̲ad̲rat Wālā saying: "I cannot read them, so I brought them to you to read."

H̲ad̲rat Wālā relates: "The Maulānā used to bear a lot of inconvenience to come and visit me while he was alive. Coincidentally, it was raining heavily on the day he passed away. I could not go personally to his funeral because I was scared of falling sick due to a severe plague which was going around at the time. So the Maulānā's family brought his body to my place. This made me think of his constant practice of coming personally to visit me."

This makes me remember another incident which demonstrates that the Maulānā continued showing his kindness to H̲ad̲rat Wālā even from the ʿĀlam-e-Barzakh (the period between death and resurrection). After H̲ad̲rat Wālā returned to Thānah Bhawan from Kānpūr, the Maulānā's son-in-law, Janāb H̲āfiz̲ ʿIs̲matullāh S̲āh̲ib, who had been H̲ad̲rat Wālā's classmate during their childhood saw the Maulānā in his dream. He was saying with reference to H̲ad̲rat Wālā: "He has arrived from Kānpūr. Why don't you invite him for a meal? You must invite him, slaughter the rooster which you have domesticated and feed it to him." Subsequently, he slaughtered the rooster and invited H̲ad̲rat Wālā.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā relates: "Maulānā loved his students intensely and was very enthusiastic about teaching. It was his ardent desire to simplify for his students and teach them whatever he knew. This is why he used to continue teaching without bothering about the time. This obviously annoyed the students. When the Maulānā passed away in a plague, several of his students also died one after the other. They would see him in a dream, he would tell them: "Come and read your lesson to me", and they would die within a few days. There were a few outside students [not of Thānah Bhawan] who had gone back to their respective towns. They also dreamt of Maulānā asking them to read their lesson to him, and they too passed away within a few

days of seeing the dream. In this way, it seemed as if the Maulānā singled out his students at the time of his death and assembled them in that world as well."

In short, the Maulānā was very attached to Hadrat Wālā and although he was Hadrat Wālā's teacher, he accorded a lot of respect to him. Hadrat Wālā too had a lot of faith in him. He relates incidents from the Maulānā's life to this day, and says: "Glory to Allāh! What an era that was! What great people they were!"

Hadrat Sayyid Muhammad 'Ābid Deobandī

Hadrat Hājī Sayyid Muhammad ʿĀbid Deobandī was from among the khulafā' of Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He was well-known specifically for his ʿamalīyyāt. He was also a principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband for a short period. He was very particular about adhering strictly to his time table. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said: "A person who knew him well could say at any time that Hājī Sāhib was engaged in a particular task at this moment. If a person went to verify it, he would certainly find him engaged in that task. It could not be otherwise."

Hadrat Wālā had many opportunities of meeting him during his student days because Hadrat Wālā used to perform most of his salāh in Chattah Musjid where Hājī Sāhib used to remain most of the time. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib used to perform salāh in the same musjid, and also lead the people in the salāh. Hājī Sāhib used to lead the people in salāh in Maulānā Yaʿqūb's absence. Instead of performing the salāh himself, Hājī Sāhib would quite often ask Hadrat Wālā to lead the people in salāh. His noble thoughts about Hadrat Wālā can be gauged from this.

It was Hājī Sāhib's practice to make elaborate preparations for opening the fast in the month of Ramadān, and distributing the food to everyone. He maintained this practice during his stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah. Hadrat Wālā was in Makkah Muʿazzamah during the same period. No matter in which part of the Haram Sharīf Hadrat Wālā was at the time of opening fast, Hājī Sāhib would certainly send his food there. This demonstrates his special attachment with Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Wālā too was very respectful towards him and showed due consideration to him. Some of the elders of Deoband had some misunderstanding with Hājī Sāhib and Hadrat Wālā happened to go there at the time. Based on his previous relations with Hājī Sāhib, it could not happen that Hadrat Wālā does not go to meet him. On the other hand, it was also necessary for him to give consideration to his teachers. Hadrat Wālā experienced a severe conflict of emotions. He eventually went to Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib and said to him: "Hadrat! Based on my previous relations with Hadrat Hājī Sayyid Muhammad ʿĀbid Sāhib, whenever I come to Deoband I make it a point of going to meet him. But I am very confused on this occasion. If I do not go to meet him, it will seem most ill-mannered and disloyal. And if I do go, it may turn out to be against the welfare of the Madrasah." Hadrat Maulānā said: "No, no, you should certainly go to meet him. It is not against the welfare of the Madrasah. In fact, it may decrease his opposition to the Madrasah."

Hājī Sāhib was a senior Pīr Bhāi to Hadrat Wālā and when he experienced any spiritual objections, he went and conferred with Hājī Sāhib. On receiving a satisfactory reply from him, Hadrat Wālā became even more convinced that in addition to being an expert in the field of ʿamalīyyāt, he was also a spiritual master. Details in this regard will be provided in a later chapter – inshā Allāh.

Hadrat Hājī Muhammad Anwar Deobandī

Hadrat Hājī Muhammad Anwar Sāhib Deobandī was a khalīfah of Hadrat Hājī Sayyid Muhammad ʿĀbid Sāhib Deobandī and a senior Sufi. In fact, some people considered him to be superior to his shaykh. When he returned from hajj he experienced a condition which caused people to think that he had become mad. He would give his items for free to people, cook large amounts of food and distribute it to all and sundry, and would remain in a sort of intoxication most of the time.

Hadrat Wālā happened to go to Deoband during this time so he went to visit him. Hājī Sāhib said to Hadrat Wālā in privacy: "I have to tell you something which I have not told anyone else as yet. However, you must not tell anyone as long as I am alive. When I was in the Haram Sharīf, I saw a few Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* while I was in a state of wakefulness. The

present condition which you see in me is the effect of the gazes of those Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*."

The people asked Hadrat Wālā: "Did he tell you anything special when you were in privacy with him?" Hadrat Wālā spoke the truth and said: "Yes he did tell me something but he forbade me from mentioning it to anyone as long as he is living. So I cannot reveal it to you now."

As per Hājī Sāhib's instruction, Hadrat Wālā did not disclose it to anyone as long as he was alive. Once he passed away, he did not try to conceal it.

It becomes clear from this story that Hājī Sāhib considered Hadrat Wālā to be the only one worthy of this special spiritual secret. This is why he did not relate it to anyone else and also forbade him from relating it to anyone.

Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sahāranpūrī

Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh* was the most senior khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He loved Hadrat Wālā a lot. He made the following statement about Hadrat Wālā to one of his special associates: "I had love for him from the time he did not even know me." This statement will soon be re-quoted from *Khwān Khalīl*.

Whenever I used to go to Hadrat Wālā in Thānah Bhawan, I had to pass Sahāranpūr. I always had the opportunity of going to meet Hadrat Maulānā during these trips. On one such occasion, he said to me with genuine humility and affection: "I am also sitting along the way, and the righteous people who are moving to and fro from Maulānā [referring to Hadrat Wālā] come and visit me."

I now relate some incidents which demonstrate Hadrat Maulānā's special attention to and consideration of Hadrat Wālā. These are quoted from *Khwān Khalīl* which is written by Hadrat Wālā himself.

1. I had been enjoying the Maulānā's respects since a long time. But this increased considerably after I left Kānpūr and returned to Thānah Bhawan. I used to go up and down to Sahāranpūr quite often and made it a point of attending Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm's annual graduation ceremony. In each of my

visits to Sahāranpūr, I used to sit for lengthy periods in Maulānā's company and benefit from him.

I was junior to him in every respect; in age, rank, knowledge and practice. In fact there was no comparison in the latter two. In fact, merely mentioning this concept of seniority and youthfulness appears to be a type of claim to knowledge and practice. The strange thing is that despite this, Maulānā's treatment of me was certainly as an equal. Sometimes his treatment was like a junior to a senior. What can be greater than this! His conduct was certainly out of humility. It is possible that it was also because of the fact that his affiliation to A'lā Hadrat Hājī [Imdādullāh] Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* was via Hadrat Gangohī while mine was direct. If this was also a reason for the manner in which he treated me, it proves his highest level of practical wisdom in the sense that he preserved the ranks of people and treated them accordingly.

2. The Maulānā said to one of his special associates: "I had love for Ashraf from the time he did not even know me."

3. Although I was of a lower rank than him, he used to honour me regularly by sending gifts to me.

4. I used to be extremely shy to deliver talks in his presence but I could not excuse myself because I had to carry out his instruction. But the Maulānā would listen very attentively and with full enthusiasm.

5. He said with regard to my lectures: "There is no room to point a finger at his lectures."

6. He used to honour me by visiting me occasionally. The first time he came, I recall making elaborate food preparations out of love for him. I also invited a few seniors of the town because this is also considered to be a type of conferring honour to a guest. The Maulānā said jokingly: "Why were so elaborate preparations made?" I replied: "Hadrat himself is the cause of it. If Hadrat visits us often, we will not go into such formalities. Your rare visits are the causes of these elaborate preparations." Subsequently, he began visiting more often and the formalities in preparations also decreased.

7. I differed with one of my friends on the issue of whether it was permissible to take a photograph of the rear of a person – where his face is not photographed. We continued

corresponding with each other on this issue. Eventually, I convinced my friend to appoint Maulānā to give his decision and then requested Maulānā to research the issue. Maulānā gladly accepted and provided an answer which we both accepted. This arbitration is published towards the end of the fourth volume of *Fatāwā Imdādīyyah*. The Maulānā's prelude to his decision is worth reading. He wrote:

> This unworthy servant is not qualified to pass a decision on an issue which the noble 'ulamā' differ in. However, I am doing it in compliance to a noble order which was issued to me. I now present whatever came to my mind on this issue…

8. There is a porch attached to the southern section of Pīr Muhammad Wālī Musjid. A shelter was constructed over this porch. The Maulānā wrote something in this regard and a reply to it was presented here. Several letters were exchanged but no final decision was made. This correspondence is titled *Musā'alah Ahl al-Khullāh fī az-Zullah* (Asking people of friendship about the shelter). This has been published towards the end of volume two of *Tarjīh ar-Rājih*. The beginning of the third letter contains a hearty statement. It reads as follows:

> Your letter was a cause of blessings. Several days passed thinking about whether I should say anything about this issue or not because repetition might be burdensome. I eventually decided to set aside my thoughts and say what needs to be said.

Observe how the Maulānā combined consideration to the truth and consideration to my feelings in this one sentence. The effect of this was that although I did not receive a reply to what he presented, I realized that not receiving a reply should not be considered to be a proof in itself…and the scholars should be consulted for additional research on this subject.

9. Some people spread some untrue stories about me. These became the talk of the town. I was in Meerut at the time and was totally unaware of it. A well-wisher conveyed it to me. I was quite saddened and more concerned about the ill-feeling it must have caused to Maulānā. I therefore wrote to him to verify the story. I received the following reply from the Maulānā:

> I do not know what joy the people get in spreading false stories and thereby causing pain to the hearts

of good people. The attachment and love which I had for you since before is still intact. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for that.

[The Maulānā quotes the following couplet]:

"It is not true that love for you has left Hāfiz's heart. In fact, the first promise which was made to you shall remain until the very end."

Inshā Allāh, the love which I have for you in my heart and which I consider to be a treasure for me in the Hereafter cannot change. The stories which I heard are over exaggerated.

I quoted the gist of the above story here. Full details are mentioned in *Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt* number four. When this entire episode was over, the Maulānā said to me: "It was I who had conveyed the information of these rumours without attributing it to myself via the well-wisher[1] so that you could respond swiftly and prevent it from going out of hand."

10. There was a circumcision ceremony in a particular town. Coincidentally, Maulānā [Khalīl Ahmad] from Sahāranpūr, Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib from Deoband and I from Thānah Bhawan all landed at the same place. But I did not attend the ceremony and returned home because of certain objections which I had to it. The other elders did not pay attention to those obstacles and participated in the ceremony. Later on, someone asked the Maulānā the reason for this difference in approach. Look at his humble reply: "We practised on the fatwā while he [referring to Hadrat Wālā] practised on taqwā." His reply clearly demonstrates his humility and also his full consideration to providing a wonderful explanation to the action of one who acted differently from him on a disputed issue.

11. The Maulānā had humility like that of the pious predecessors in the sense that he used to also consult his juniors on academic issues and complexities. If he was

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[1] The well-wisher refers to the person who informed Hadrat Wālā of the rumours when Hadrat Wālā was in Meerut. So what this means is that Hadrat Maulānā asked the person to convey the information to Hadrat Wālā so that he may respond to it and thereby put an end to all the stories and rumours. (Translator)

convinced by the explanations of his juniors, he would certainly accept them. We were travelling to Bahāwalpūr on one occasion when he said to me: "One of the etiquette of accepting gifts as gauged from the Hadīth is that the person must not have any expectation or anticipation. But whenever we are on a journey, those who invite us are in the habit of giving us gifts. We have become so used to receiving gifts on these journeys that our mind goes towards the gifts. Are these thoughts of the gifts included in this anticipation? If they are, it will be against the Sunnah to accept them."

Where did I have the qualification to reply to a question posed by such a great scholar and Sufi!? However, because his tone suggested that an answer had to be given, it became necessary for me to give an answer. I said: "I think that we have to make a distinction. First of all, there is a strong possibility of receiving a gift. We will now have to check that in the case where we did not receive a gift, did we feel offended or not? If we did feel offended, then the thoughts which we experienced previously will be considered to be an anticipation [which is against the Sunnah]. But if we did not feel offended, it will not be considered to be an anticipation. It is merely a thought for which there is no ruling." The Maulānā was most impressed by this reply and made du'ā' for me.

12. He said to me on one occasion: "A Hadīth states that 12 000 people will never be defeated as a result of being small in number. But no restriction is mentioned in the Hadīth. So is it a general ruling which includes every situation even if there are hundreds of thousands of unbelievers who are ready to fight you, or is there any proof which restricts the number? If it is a general ruling, then the objection which we can make is that there were many places in which the Muslims were more than this number [of 12 000] but were still defeated."

The obvious meaning of this Hadīth is that it is a general ruling and there is no reason to restrict it without a strong proof. If the Muslims were defeated at any place then that too is not a proof. Where they were defeated, it was because of some other reason and not because of small numbers. The reason could be obvious, e.g. disunity in the ranks, or it could be concealed, e.g. self-conceit, relying on one's means, etc. as had happened in the Battle of Hunayn when the Muslims were 12 000 in number and the unbelievers were 4 000 (as stated in *Jalālayn*).

The Muslims were overpowered in the beginning because of their pride over their large numbers (as stated in the Qur'ān: "On the day of Hunayn when you prided yourselves over your large numbers…").[1] Then towards the end, the very same overpowered Muslims became victorious (Allāh says: "Allāh then sent down His assurance to His Messenger and to the believers, and He sent down armies which you did not see…").[2] The descent of Allāh's assurance was dependent on the removal of the cause of defeat, viz. pride. And the pride was removed through repentance." The Maulānā was very happy and commended my answer.

Note: This clearly demonstrates the Maulānā's humility, absence of pride in seeking the truth, and striving to increase his knowledge. This was done out of submission to Allāh's order: "Say: O my Sustainer! Increase me in knowledge."

13. I was returning from Bahāwalpūr by train and was accompanied by Maulānā. Coincidentally, only Maulānā and I were in that coach. The rest of our companions were in other coaches. It was the time of zuhr, it was intensely hot and we were perspiring profusely. The Maulānā, in his absolute humility and informality, picked up a fan and began fanning me. How could I allow him to continue! I took hold of the fan. He said: "What is wrong? There is no one watching us." (he said this because there was no third person in the coach)

I said: "He is certainly watching." He asked: "Who is watching?" I said: "The Being for whose sake I show respect to you is certainly watching." He smiled and kept the fan aside.

Look at the level of his selflessness! Look at how he treated his junior! Far greater than this was that when he realized that I was feeling embarrassed, he did not persist. I am saying that this was greater because when he started fanning me, he did it to provide comfort to my body; and when he stopped, he did it to provide comfort to my heart. His second action is obviously superior.

14. I differed with the Maulānā on certain interpretational and customary issues which concerned mutual interactions and matters pertaining to organization and arrangement. In the

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 25.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 26.

presence of such differences, I felt that I could only have rational love for the Maulānā. I did not think I could be naturally drawn towards him. However, my feelings were such that let alone when he was present, even when I merely thought of him I experienced an attraction towards him which I could not understand. It was probably the effect of this that when I dreamt of him, it resulted in the same feeling. This is a clear proof of his being beloved, i.e. the lover does not even think he loves another – in fact, he thinks he does not love him – but his feelings pull him. I consider this to be Allāh's grace and mercy on me for having safeguarded me against the harms of these differences.

Note: I [the author of this book] also experience the same pull towards Hadrat Maulānā in my wakefulness and in my dreams. All praise is due to Allāh.

Hadrat Shāh 'Abd ar-Rahīm Rāipūrī

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh 'Abd ar-Rahīm Sāhib Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* was from among the most senior khulafā' of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He was a gracious and blessed Sufi. Hadrat Wālā says with regard to Shāh Sāhib: "My faith in him was natural and without having searched for proofs. My heart automatically testified that Shāh Sāhib is a pious and righteous man." Simplicity, religiosity and humility are distinctly seen in most of Shāh Sāhib's associates and attendants. This is a clear proof of his blessedness. Hadrat Wālā also says: "Although Shāh Sāhib was extremely humble, he never feared anyone when proclaiming the truth. He would lower his gaze and frankly state whatever had to be said."

Hadrat Shāh Sāhib used to treat Hadrat Wālā with real love and affection. He would attend Hadrat Wālā's lectures enthusiastically. Hadrat Wālā went to Rāipūr to visit him on one occasion. Shāh Sāhib had just recovered from an illness but was still feeling a bit weak. He was in his place of solitude which was on the roof of his room. Hadrat Wālā was in the courtyard below. Shāh Sāhib was so concerned about Hadrat Wālā's comfort that he would come downstairs again and again to check if Hadrat Wālā needed anything. He kept a watchful gaze all the time to ensure Hadrat Wālā was not discomforted in any way. He was so concerned that, as related by Hadrat Wālā: "Whenever my eyes opened during the night, I would see Shāh Sāhib present nearby. This is how he spent most of the

night. He also went out of his way to feed me. He interceded on behalf of one of his attendants by saying: 'This is my devoted friend. He is very good in cooking rice. He has taken a lot of care in cooking some rice for you. I request you to accept it.' In short, he paid a lot of attention to me, and treated me with great honour."

We learnt from some reliable people that when Hadrat Shāh Sāhib fell ill and large crowds of people began visiting him without any consideration to time, he said: "The principles laid down by Maulānā Thānwī provide a lot of comfort."

Hadrat Maulānā Siddīq Ahmad Ambhetwī

He was also one of the senior khulafā' of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu*. He too showed a lot of love and affection for Hadrat Wālā. He used to attend Hadrat Wālā's lectures despite being a senior practising scholar himself. I have not heard any specific incident which indicates his kindness towards Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā mentions his kindness in general terms and also that he was with him on his hajj journey. Both his sons who are scholars themselves are presently associated to Hadrat Wālā and benefiting from him.

Hadrat Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Amrohī

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Ahmad Hasan Sāhib Amrohī *rahimahullāh* was a most beloved and upright student of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*. He was most probably a khalīfah of Shaykh al-'Arab wa al-'Ajam Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*. He was from among the eminent 'ulamā' of India. His eloquent speeches and writings, and his expertise in debating were well-known. He and Hadrat Wālā had many occasions of delivering lectures in numerous places. Each one had many opportunities of listening to the other one's lectures. They accorded much respect and consideration to each other although Hadrat Wālā was much younger than him.

Hadrat Wālā was a guest of the Maulānā in Amroha and forgot to ask him directions to the toilet. Hadrat Wālā needed to relieve himself in the latter part of the night and was very stressed because he did not know who he could ask. He was still worried in these thoughts when the Maulānā suddenly came out of his house and asked: "Do you need to go to the

toilet?” When Hadrat Wālā replied in the affirmative, the Maulānā curtained off the women’s section, personally brought clods of soil, water and a water can, and placed all in the toilet. Hadrat Wālā was quite embarrassed and said in a state of hesitation: “The clods of soil are an additional blessing. What was the need to bring them?” The Maulānā replied in all humility: “What is there if I placed them for you?”

Whenever Hadrat Wālā relates this story, he says: “From our group, the Maulānā was one person who used to wear very expensive clothing which bordered on extreme formality. I too assumed the same thing, but when he treated me in the manner in which he did on that night, I was more than convinced of his humility, informality and simplicity. I realized that his refined and elegant temperament was the reason behind his expensive dressing, and not extravagance and formality.”

Hadrat Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Kānpūrī And Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Allāhābādī

Hadrat Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Sāhib Kānpūrī and Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Allāhābādī were Hadrat Wālā’s Pīr Bhāis and khulafā’ of Shaykh al-‘Arab wa al-‘Ajam Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*. They loved Hadrat Wālā dearly although they had certain differences on the practice of samā‘ and other practices. Maulānā Kānpūrī was especially attached to Hadrat Wālā. On one occasion, he took Hadrat Wālā’s left over food and ate it in the presence of Hadrat Wālā and all others who were present in that function. He did this as a source of blessing. The Maulānā did this despite being a well-known and distinguished figure in Kānpūr who was looked up with reverence, while Hadrat Wālā was quite young and still in the early stages of his life. Another reason why the Maulānā liked Hadrat Wālā was because he ardently loved Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* and personally heard from the latter the special manner in which he spoke about Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Allāhābādī also showed due consideration to Hadrat Wālā. A person invited the Maulānā together with Hadrat Wālā to a meal. The Maulānā practised samā‘, and in most cases would accept an invitation on condition it was followed by a session of samā‘

which, in his words, was a spiritual food. This is why Hadrat Wālā excused himself from accepting the invitation. But the inviter promised there will be no samāʿ session in Hadrat Wālā's presence. Hadrat Wālā too gave consideration to them by departing soon after the meal. But when he got up to leave, the Maulānā also got up and walked him to his conveyance.

Hadrat Wālā assumed that he came to bid him farewell, he will return to the house and join in the samāʿ session. But he did not do this. Hadrat Wālā sat in his conveyance while the Maulānā proceeded to his own conveyance and departed. The Maulānā considered it discourteous to attend a session in which Hadrat Wālā was not present. Had he attended, it would have meant he was waiting for Hadrat Wālā's departure so that he could initiate the samāʿ session. The Maulānā was most considerate of Hadrat Wālā's feelings and therefore changed his habit completely.

Glory to Allāh! Look at the sincerity and absence of fanaticism in these elders! Look at how they respected each other's views despite differences in their affinities, and see how they safeguarded themselves from hurting the feelings of the other. Unlike today when such practices are intentionally carried out solely to irk others.

The Maulānā said to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion: "You don't ever come to Radaulī Sharīf?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "You don't ever take us there!" He said: "Here, I am telling you to come with us." Hadrat Wālā said: "Hadrat! I will need you to focus on me so that you could create the capability of samāʿ in me first and make me like you so that I could be worthy of joining in." Hadrat Wālā actually used this subtle and humble approach to convey to him that there are certain prerequisites for the permissibility of samāʿ. The Maulānā fulfils those prerequisites so he listens to it, while Hadrat Wālā does not fulfil them and therefore does not listen.

When Hadrat Wālā went to visit the grave of Hadrat Khwājah Muʿīn ad-Dīn Chishtī Ajmerī *quddisa sirruhu*, he made it a point to ask the attendants to show him the Maulānā's grave so that he could pray there. This demonstrates the bond which Hadrat Wālā had with his Pīr Bhāis.

I recall another story which demonstrates this bond. Janāb Murtadā Khān Sāhib passed away. He was the manager of

Asghar ʿAlī Muhammad ʿAlī Perfume Factory in Lucknow and a Pīr Bhāi of Hadrat Wālā. He loved Hadrat Wālā as if he was his shaykh. Hadrat Wālā received the news of his demise after the zuhr salāh via a letter which was sent to him by the deceased's son. Hadrat Wālā expressed much sorrow and grief. After the ʿasr salāh he addressed all who were present, saying: "The deceased was my Pīr Bhāi and he has many rights over me." He then requested them all to pray for his forgiveness.

At this point I consider it most appropriate to quote a foreword which Hadrat Wālā wrote to a book titled *Matlaʿ al-Anwār* which is written by ʿAllāmah Muftī Rukn ad-Dīn Sāhib. This foreword demonstrates that while Hadrat Wālā had noble thoughts about people who held divergent views from his, he remained – by Allāh's grace – firm on his own creed. The foreword reads as follows:

> From this insignificant and unworthy servant, Ashraf ʿAlī – may Allāh pardon him – to the one with many merits, may Allāh *taʿālā* perpetuate his kindness.
>
> As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh
>
> I do not have a lot of time on my hands, so I illuminated myself with parts of *Matlaʿ al-Anwār* in accordance with the following couplet:
>
> "A single strand from your locks of hair is sufficient for me. Leave aside desire, your mere fragrance is enough."
>
> Hadrat Maulānā was my Pīr Bhāi and I considered him to be my elder brother. Bearing in mind that he was my elder, it is essential for me to be respectful towards him. Since I also considered him to be my brother, I am permitted to be a bit informal towards him.
>
> Because of these two positions [of being an elder and a brother], I am presenting the following view which combines respect and informality. The book is worthy of emulation. However, caution demands that the disputed actions and rulings be excluded from emulation for some people, while the actions be excluded for all. This is closest to caution. I feel that

if H̲ad̲rat were to read this foreword of mine, while he would neither consider me to be right nor wrong, he would certainly consider me to be excused. I pray for H̲ad̲rat and all his people from the bottom of my heart. O Allāh! You become theirs and make them Yours. I also request the same prayer for myself.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muh̲ammad Raushan Khān

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muh̲ammad Raushan Khān S̲āh̲ib Murādābādī *rah̲imahullāh* was a khalīfah of H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Gangohī *rah̲imahullāh* and a Sufi with burning passion for Allāh *taʿālā*. I was present with H̲ad̲rat Wālā when he went to visit the Maulānā on his death bed. After speaking about his illness, he said: "Anyway these are things which accompany illness. You must pray to Allāh *taʿālā* that I depart from this world with īmān. Allāh *taʿālā* appointed you as the Mujaddid of this century. May Allāh illuminate the world through your blessings and may He completely uproot baseless customs and innovations through you."

I remember the above words almost exactly as he said them. He said them with real emotion, tearful eyes and a changed voice. In the meanwhile, H̲ad̲rat Wālā was listening to him deferentially with his head lowered. H̲ad̲rat Wālā then raised his hands and prayed for pardon and wellness. I think he made the following duʿā':

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّا نَسْئَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدِّيْنِ وَالدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

O Allāh! We beg You for pardon and wellness in our religious life, worldly life and in the Hereafter.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā added: "We ought to seek wellness from Allāh *taʿālā* in every situation and condition."

A reliable disciple of the Maulānā used to relate to me: "The Maulānā was fully convinced that H̲ad̲rat Wālā was a Mujaddid. In fact, he had particularly instructed me saying: 'You must certainly go to meet Maulānā Thānwī. He is the Mujaddid of this century.'"

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Yah̲yā

Janāb Maulānā Muh̲ammad Yah̲yā S̲āh̲ib Kāndhlawī *rah̲imahullāh* was the special attendant of H̲ad̲rat Maulānā

Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He said to me: "I had always thought that Hadrat Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* was the Mujaddid of this century. But I have come to the conclusion that our Maulānā's [Hadrat Gangohī's] blessings were specific, and it was the 'ulamā' who benefited more from him. I now see the Muslims benefiting more from Maulānā Thānwī. This is why the qualities of a Mujaddid are found to a greater extent in him. In fact, I think that Hadrat's rank is above that of a Mujaddid."

All praise is due to Allāh, the reader was presented with a few examples of the special attention and focus which the elders of our own spiritual family and of other spiritual families directed at Hadrat Wālā. The reader must have gauged very well that Allāh *taʿālā* had directed the hearts of senior Sufis towards Hadrat Wālā from the very beginning. Those of insight had fathomed and witnessed Hadrat Wālā's essential jewel and natural capabilities through the light of their insight. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Hadrat Wālā always interacted with his elders with genuine respect and reverence. We hear Hadrat Wālā saying this quite often: "All praise is due to Allāh! I can say that I neither have knowledge nor practice. However, Allāh *taʿālā* conferred me with a bounty through which I can hope for salvation; it is respect."

When making mention of his elders, Hadrat Wālā expresses immense sorrow over the present day attitude of people. He says:

> The temperaments of people have changed completely. There is so much of disregard for facts that I can honestly say that I do not even feel like speaking with anyone and I cannot appraise anyone even as a superficial Sufi. I see all of them dyed in the same colour. I thought all Sufis must be like those whom I encountered in the past. Therefore, their qualities and traits did not seem to be so extraordinary at the time. But now when I recall them, it seems to me that whatever they did was like a supernatural feat in comparison to today's times.

Hadrat Wālā would often think about those excellent and blessed days and quote the following couplet:

إذا الناس ناس، والزمان زمان

When people were genuine people, and the era was a real era.

He would also quote this couplet:

> My friends drank the wine and departed. They left the tavern empty and departed.

Hadrat Wālā used to quote the following Arabic couplet with real passion and joy:

أولئك آبائي فجئني بمثلهم – إذا جمعتنا يا جرير المجامع

O Jarīr! When you bring us together in large assemblies, then present to us people as great as my forefathers.

I now conclude this chapter and ask Allāh *taʿālā* to bestow me with the love of those personalities and the inspiration to emulate them. The most perfect and easiest way of doing this in today's times is to follow and emulate Hadrat Wālā because, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, all their blessed qualities are collectively found in Hadrat Wālā.

A Few Special Contemporaries

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the fundamental theme of this chapter has been concluded. I now list some of Hadrat Wālā's special contemporaries. They enjoyed a special relationship with Hadrat Wālā and who – despite being his contemporaries, class mates or his peers – did not treat him as an equal but as someone in whom they had a lot of confidence and whom they look up to with respect.

On one hand, the favours and kindness of these personalities are of slightly a lower level than those of the previously-mentioned elders because they are not as popularly known as the former group. On the other hand, their kindness to and faith in Hadrat Wālā are worthy of more attention because when it comes to the elders and seniors, their favours could have been based purely on affection and kindness, while this possibility does not exist with contemporaries. This is because there is generally competition among contemporaries and a carefree demeanour with equals. This distinction between the two was the reason for writing the present addendum. However, I did not see the need to relate incidents which display the respect and reverence which these contemporaries accorded to Hadrat Wālā because there are many people at

present who witnessed the manner in which they interact with Hadrat Wālā.

The names of these contemporaries are now listed after the above necessary petition.

1. Janāb Hāfiz Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, former principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, son of Hujjatul Islām Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*.

2. Janāb Hakīm Masʿūd Ahmad Sāhib, son of Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh*.

3. Janāb Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh*, former deputy principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

4. Janāb Maulānā Sayyid Asghar Husayn Sāhib Deobandī, lecturer at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

5. Janāb Maulānā Muhammad Yāsīn Sāhib Deobandī, former lecturer at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

6. Janāb Maulānā Hajī Shafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib Muhājir Makkī, special attendant of Hadrat Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hājī Shāh Imdādullāh Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*.

From among all these contemporaries, Janāb Hāfiz Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Janāb Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* were the most well known. Their interaction with Hadrat Wālā was the most respectful, reverential and courteous although they were his classmates. However, Hadrat Wālā surpassed them in his ability to provide proofs and evidences.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Eternal Good Fortune

Gauging from the incidents and stories which were related previously, it becomes absolutely clear that Allāh *taʿālā* had created Hadrat Wālā specifically for the important responsibility of revival of Islam and rectification of the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Indications of this were glaringly visible even before he was born.

We related in detail how Hadrat Wālā was still in the world of souls when Allāh *taʿālā* turned the attention of a pious personality and Sufi, Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib Pānīpattī, to pray for Hadrat Wālā's arrival into this world of existence. Allāh *taʿālā* also inspired this Sufi to give a name for Hadrat Wālā long before he was conceived. A clear proof that foretelling Hadrat Wālā's birth and naming him was an inspiration from Allāh *taʿālā* is that this foretelling was done at a time when Hadrat Wālā's parents had given up all hope of getting any children. When Hadrat Hāfiz Sāhib named Hadrat Wālā while the latter was still in his mother's womb, another woman whose daughter-in-law was expecting a child requested him to give a name for her grandchild as well. But Hāfiz Sāhib replied with an angry frown: "What do you think, I am an agriculturist who goes around naming children?" This clearly demonstrates that foretelling Hadrat Wālā's birth and naming him was done through divine inspiration and was his peculiarity.

In short, Hadrat Wālā enjoyed the most special attention of the elders right from the beginning. Details in this regard were provided in a previous chapter titled: Meeting Pious Elders. Allāh *taʿālā* had provided the choicest resources for Hadrat Wālā's external and internal training from the very beginning. First of all, he came onto the field of existence through the prayers of a pious personality and received his spiritual attention and focus from the time of his conception. The effects of this took the form of attraction towards Allāh *taʿālā* and severing himself from the creation. These effects are found in him to this day and are actually increasing by the day. This

was followed by the affectionate care of his righteous mother and the training of his most wise, intelligent and kind father. Then he studied the external sciences by the Ghazzālīs and Rāzīs of his time, some of whom were spiritual masters of the highest level and the most perfect Sufi shaykhs. Each one of them was an expert in his respective field. All these bounties and favours were sufficiently explained previously.

The Greatest Bounty

We will now provide details on that greatest bounty which is the grand total of everything. All previously mentioned bounties return to this one and were preludes to this one particular bounty. It is the bounty of the honour of bayʿah – pledging allegiance.

Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Imām at-Tarīq Shaykh al-ʿUlamā' wa al-Mashā'ikh Hadrat Hājī Shāh Imdādullāh Sāhib Thānwī Chishtī Sābrī Muhājir Makkī *quddisa sirruhu* is well known throughout the world and therefore needs no introduction. According to Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muzaffar Husayn Sāhib Kāndhlawī *quddisa sirruhu*, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's lofty rank was exactly like that of the elders of the past, although he was born in this era. (This was quoted by Qārī Muhammad ʿAlī Khān Jalālābādī).

Countless erudite ʿulamā' – even distinguished spiritual masters of other spiritual families – considered it to be a source of pride to be able to pledge allegiance to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. I can therefore state without any hesitation that there was no personality like him in this era who combined the Sharīʿah and the Tarīqah, and who was an asylum for so many ʿulamā' and spiritual masters. Famous Arab ʿulamā', and especially the renowned and prominent ʿulamā' of India – almost all of them – were aligned to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and crumb-eaters at his table. Hadrat Wālā too is from among those select few. In fact, in certain respects, he enjoys the position of being from among his choicest disciples.

Divine Inspiration

Like the other phases of Hadrat Wālā's religious life, the pledge of allegiance and the perfection of spiritual abundance were also realized in a strange and extraordinary manner through Allāh *taʿālā*. Divine help came to him in such a manner that

Allāh *ta'ālā* directed a distinguished spiritual master and exceptional spiritual mentor like Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* towards Hadrat Wālā.

Details in this regard are as follows: Hadrat Wālā was still a young man studying at Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband when Hadrat Hājī Sāhib sent a message from Makkah Mu'azzamah to Hadrat Wālā's father saying: "You must come for hajj. And when you come, you must bring your eldest son with." He sent this message although he had emigrated from India long before Hadrat Wālā was born, and apparently did not even know him. However, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was in the habit of enquiring about his beloved hometown [Thānah Bhawan] and its people from those who used to come to Makkah for hajj. We are therefore inclined to think that he must have heard something about Hadrat Wālā via this medium. But what could there have been in Hadrat Wālā during that tender age and time of studies that could have been conveyed to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib in such a distant land which caused him to develop such a strong bond with him that he summoned him to Makkah Mu'azzamah without even knowing him? We can therefore say that his instruction must have certainly stemmed from some divine indication, spiritual attraction or mutual affinity.

This can be affirmed from what we are witnessing at present: The peculiar clarity, detail and universality with which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's teachings and traditions are spreading, and the manner in which the Imdādīyyah way is being illuminated and displayed by Allāh's help through Hadrat Wālā is not being accomplished through anyone else. This is absolutely clear, there is no room to deny it. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib himself said to Hadrat Wālā on several occasions: "You are totally on my path." Furthermore, whenever Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had the opportunity of reading any of Hadrat Wālā's writings or hearing any of his talks, he would say: "May Allāh reward you. You have fully expounded what was in my heart." If anyone were to pose a question to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib while he was delivering a discourse or conducting an assembly, he would point towards Hadrat Wālā and say: "You must ask him, he has understood very well."

It was Hadrat Wālā's absolutely natural affinity, divinely decreed capability, and all-embracing lovability – which is expressed in Sufi terms as murādīyyat – which were the

fundamental reasons for Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's divinely inspired attraction towards Hadrat Wālā.

In short, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib himself thought of Hadrat Wālā in Makkah Muʿazzamah without having known him. This was explained above. A poet rightly says:

> When the thirsty ones search for water in the world,
> water also searches for them.

Commencement Of The Journey

In order for the sciences and teachings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib to be propagated, Hadrat Wālā was destined, from the very first day, to pledge allegiance to him. The divine means which were provided for this to be realized commenced when Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* went to Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband for some work. The moment Hadrat Wālā saw him, he ran to shake hands with him. There were some bricks which were lying around and, in his haste, he stumbled and was about to fall when Hadrat Maulānā caught hold of his hand and saved him. When Hadrat Wālā looked at him, he was overtaken by him and developed immense confidence in him to the extent that, in the words of Hadrat Wālā: "Without even understanding the reality and purpose of pledging allegiance, I requested him to accept my pledge." Hadrat Maulānā refused on the basis that spiritual occupation during student days would damage the acquisition of knowledge. A detailed account of this incident has been written by Hadrat Wālā in his biography on Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* titled, *Yād Yārān*. The reader may refer to it if he wishes.

A Letter To Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

Not long after this incident, Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* was departing for his third hajj in 1299 A.H. Hadrat Wālā wrote a letter to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and most probably gave it to Hadrat Maulānā to hand it to him. Hadrat Wālā said in his letter: "I requested Maulānā to accept my pledge but he refused. I request you to ask Maulānā to accept my pledge."

Pledge In Absentia

We do not know what conversation transpired between Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī. What we do know is

that instead of interceding on behalf of Hadrat Wālā and asking Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī to accept Hadrat Wālā's pledge, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib himself inducted Hadrat Wālā in absentia to himself. We learn from this that hidden behind Hadrat Maulānā's refusal to accept his pledge was Allāh's decree that Hadrat Wālā had to fall in the lot of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and be chosen to explain, expound, elucidate and simplify his teachings and to spread them in the East and West.

If this had been predestined, how could Hadrat Wālā have connected himself to anyone else!? This can be further affirmed from the fact that around the same time, another classmate of Hadrat Wālā had requested Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī to accept his pledge and he did not refuse. He accepted the classmate's pledge, causing even more disappointment to Hadrat Wālā.

Although Hadrat Wālā's pledge was directly with Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, his faith and confidence in Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* was still intact – as firm as it had been the first time he set eyes on him and when he had requested him to accept his pledge. Hadrat Wālā always viewed Hadrat Gangohī as his mentor. Whenever he faced any academic or spiritual difficulties, he consulted him without any hesitation as though he was a disciple of Hadrat Gangohī. Incidents in this regard will be related later on. On the other side, Hadrat Gangohī too always showed affection to him as he did to his own disciples, and also accorded him the respect of a Pīr Bhāi. Further affirmation that Hadrat Wālā was divinely decreed to fall in the lot of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib can be obtained from the fact that before he really got to know Hadrat Wālā, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib summoned him to Makkah Mu'azzamah via his father. This was related previously.

Departure For Hajj

The opportunity to respond to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's request was provided from the unseen as follows: Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband established a trading company in which people could purchase a share to the value of no more than 500 rupees. By the blessings of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Wālā's father was a wealthy man. He wanted to purchase more shares, so he purchased one in his name, one in Hadrat Wālā's name and one in his younger son's name. In this way, he contributed a total of 1 500 rupees in the company but on different names. After some time, he took this amount back for some reason or the

other. Hadrat Wālā learnt of this. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he was – from the very beginning - especially particular about adhering to the injunctions of the Sharīʿah. He therefore asked his father: "You had contributed this amount of 500 rupees in my name and you have taken them back. Do they belong to me or to you?" His father wrote back: "This amount was mine and your name was merely used. But I now specify it in your ownership." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "In such a case, I will have to pay zakāh on this amount and hajj has also become compulsory on me." His father sent him a cash amount to pay as zakāh, and said with regard to hajj: "Once I get your younger sister (who later became the mother of Maulānā Saʿīd Ahmad Sāhib and Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib) married, I will go for hajj next year. You must accompany me then. His father said this because his extreme love and affection for him could not permit him to allow his son to go on his own.

Although Hadrat Wālā respected his father totally and was also scared of him, he could be stubborn on occasions which needed stubbornness. When his father asked him to wait until the following year, he wrote back saying: "You must first write and give me a guarantee that you will be alive for the next four years." His father replied: "How can I give such a guarantee?" Hadrat Wālā said: "Hajj is already compulsory on me and there is no guarantee of life. Moreover, it is not permissible to delay hajj without a Sharʿī reason. His father very quickly got his daughter married in Shawwāl, and without completing all the normal customs of the wedding, he departed with Hadrat Wālā for hajj.

Stormy Seas

It was a time when the seas are normally very stormy. When they reached Ghāzī Abād station, his father met an acquaintance. When the latter learnt that they were going for hajj, he said: "Do you know what you are doing!? The seas are extremely stormy and we are constantly receiving news of violent storms." The father replied: "Brother, we are already on our way. Allāh is our master, you must pray for us." This was the response of the father. On the other side, Hadrat Wālā quoted the following couplet with full fervour:

> When we have such a strong builder like you, why should we fear the falling of the wall of the community? How can a person ever fear the waves of

the sea when he has a ship-captain like Hadrat Nūh ʿalayhis salām?

In short, Hadrat Wālā accompanied his father with full enthusiasm and eagerness to fulfil the obligation of hajj. The seas were certainly very stormy. The ship whose name was Haydarī was quite small and could not handle the crushing of the waves. It would dip so much that its railings would almost touch the surface of the water and be on the verge of sinking. The high waves would wash over the entire shelter of the ship and drench the passengers. The sailors did their utmost to steer the ship safely, kept a vigilant eye and remained occupied in finding a safe passage. In the meantime, the pilgrims were occupied in prayer, crying and begging before Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Wālā relates: "Bearing in mind that I was travelling in Allāh's cause, I never experienced any fear or worry in my heart, although we did fear drowning. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for this." He adds: "While the pilgrims were occupied in prayer and begging to Allāh *taʿālā*, the wretched irreligious sailors were laughing at us and uttering blasphemies. Allāh forbid, Allāh forbid, they were saying: 'What can Allāh do when this is the way of this ship?'" Hadrat Wālā goes further: "It is also sad to say that even during this difficult situation, some Muslims were calling on others apart from Allāh. For example, they were calling on their spiritual mentors, they were taking the name of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and so on."

Arrival In Makkah And Meeting Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā and his father eventually reached Makkah Muʿazzamah safely. He was so overcome by respect and reverence for the Holy Sanctuary, that in the beginning he would not even spit anywhere. His first glance at the Kaʿbah caused a unique yearning pull. Hadrat Wālā says: "I never experienced such a feeling in my entire life."

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was delighted by Hadrat Wālā's arrival. When Hadrat Wālā completed his hajj and visit to Madīnah, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib said to him: "You must remain with me for six months." Hadrat Wālā sought his father's permission, but his fatherly affection could not bear such a separation. Hadrat Wālā very sorrowfully said to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib: "My father is not giving me permission." Look at how strict he was in following the Sharīʿah. He said: "Obedience to your father takes

precedence. You may go back now, we will see what happens in the future."

Direct Pledge Of Allegiance

As we had related previously, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had honoured Hadrat Wālā with a pledge of allegiance in absentia in a letter which he had written to him before coming for hajj. Now he honoured him further with a direct hand-to-hand pledge of allegiance. Hadrat Wālā's father was also honoured with a pledge of allegiance. He was a very sincere and easygoing elder of olden times. When several other people were pledging allegiance to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, the latter – based on a previous request made by Hadrat Wālā's father - said to him: "Miyā 'Abd al-Haqq! You had also said you wanted to become a disciple. Come, you can also pledge allegiance now." He replied in his unique simple and easygoing manner: "No, no, Hadrat! I am not becoming a disciple now. I will become one later." It was a strange reaction. The shaykh is saying: "Become a disciple", but he was refusing. But his refusal too was based on absolute respect, sincerity and love. This will be gauged further on.

He immediately ordered a large platter of sweetmeats, obtained a beautiful turban, took twenty five rupees with him and presented himself before Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. He presented all these items with utmost respect and requested for his pledge to be accepted. This shows that he had been waiting until he obtained these items and deferred the pledge until then. The people in those days were generally very sincere, they had no airs whatsoever about them, and this entire episode also displayed these qualities. This is why Hadrat Hājī Sāhib accepted his gifts gladly, honoured him by accepting his pledge of allegiance and distributed the sweetmeats among those who were present. This episode was related here because: (1) we had intended mentioning that Hadrat Wālā's father had also pledged allegiance to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, (2) it contains a few lessons, and (3) it occurred during the same hajj journey in which Hadrat Wālā pledged allegiance directly to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib.

Traversing Religious Phases

This was Hadrat Wālā's first hajj which he performed the year he qualified from Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and had went to

Kānpūr as a teacher. Hadrat Wālā had gone to Kānpūr towards the end of Safar 1301 A.H. and the blessed journey for hajj had taken place thereafter in Shawwāl. We gauge from this that Allāh *taʿālā* enabled him to easily traverse the different religious phases one after the other. These phases could be listed as follows:

1. Hadrat Wālā was still a student in 1299 A.H. and just nineteen years old when he received the letter of bayʿah in absentia.

2. The following year – 1300 A.H. – he qualified as an ʿalim at the age of about twenty.

3. Immediately thereafter, the means for spreading Islamic sciences were provided to him in 1301 A.H. Incidentally, this was the beginning of the fourteenth century [of the Emigration] when – as per the explanation of a famous Hadīth - Allāh *taʿālā* appointed Hadrat Wālā as a Mujaddid. He proceeded to Kānpūr and occupied himself in imparting general and special sciences to Allāh's creation through public lectures and private lessons to students.

4. Allāh *taʿālā* then enabled him to visit Makkah and Madīnah that same year, to meet his spiritual mentor and to pledge bayʿah directly at his hands.

5. He returned in 1302 A.H. and continued his occupations of teaching, lecturing and passing on the injunctions of Allāh *taʿālā*. This remained his main occupation until 1307 A.H.

Correspondence With His Shaykh

Although Hadrat Wālā continued with dhikr and other spiritual exercises, and also corresponded with Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, he was more directed towards academic occupations. This is why the correspondence between him and his shaykh during this period contains subjects of a general nature. This is gauged from *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah* – a collection of letters which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib either wrote to Hadrat Wālā or replied to his letters.

In his first letter dated 22 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1303 A.H., Hadrat Wālā informs him of the passing away of a distant relative.

In his second letter dated 19 Rajab 1304 A.H., Hadrat Wālā requests Hadrat Hājī Sāhib to accept the position of patron of his madrasah.

In the third letter dated 12 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1306 A.H., Hadrat Hājī Sāhib expresses his joy over the fact that Hadrat Wālā gave up his occupation of printing, and returned to teaching and lecturing.

Dhikr And Spiritual Exercises

We learn from the above that the first three letters contained general subjects. As for dhikr and spiritual exercises, these commence from the fourth letter dated 22 Muharram 1308 A.H. It becomes clear from this that special attention to dhikr must have started towards the end of 1307 A.H. although it had been continuing previously. Hadrat Wālā himself says in this regard: "Although I could not achieve anything, I had an enthusiasm for dhikr from the time I pledged bayʿah and was never found wanting in this regard."

Attachment To The Spiritual Path

I say: How could Hadrat Wālā be devoid of dhikr when he was so particular about tahajjud salāh long before he reached the age maturity!? This was mentioned in the chapter on his childhood. Furthermore, long before he could pledge bayʿah – when he was still a student – he used to attend the circles of meditation of Hadrat Maulānā Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib, the former principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. Hadrat Wālā relates with regard to the effects of attending these circles: "No traces of selfishness remained in me and I felt as though I was an angel."

This obviously demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's natural spiritual capabilities. Moreover, during his student days when he had not pledged bayʿah as yet, he was overcome by intense fear. He went tremblingly to his affectionate teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib, and said: "Hadrat, show me something with which I could acquire peace and tranquillity." The Maulānā responded spontaneously: "Repent because this is like a request for unbelief because īmān is suspended between fear and hope. As for peace and tranquillity, that can be enjoyed by a believer only in the Hereafter." Hadrat Wālā relates: "When Hadrat Maulānā said this to me, my eyes

opened to reality and it was also a sort of consolation because the reality was made clear to me."

Another incident which took place during his student days is related: Hadrat Wālā read a story in a book. The story reads thus: A shaykh asked his disciple: "Do you know Allāh?" He replied: "How can I know Allāh? I only know you." Hadrat Wālā was infuriated and angered by this answer. He proceeded to his Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib, quoted the answer to him and said: "Hadrat, just look at this. There is so much of fanaticism and Sufi-worship that even in the presence of the shaykh, a person feels that he does not need Allāh!" The Maulānā explained the statement in a very subtle manner by asking him: "Do you know Allāh?" Hadrat Wālā's mind immediately moved to the point that who can really fathom Allāh *taʿālā* and know Him as He ought to be known? So this is what he said to his teacher. The Maulānā said: "Why, then, do you not consider the disciple's answer in the same vein? Why do you have to issue a fatwā of unbelief against him?"

During his student days, Hadrat Wālā wanted to study the *Mathnawī Sharīf* under Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib but the principal, Hadrat Maulānā Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib did not permit it, and said: "Do you want the Maulānā to remain here in the Madrasah or not?" He said this because the Maulānā himself was a spiritual master. If he were to teach the *Mathnawī Sharīf* he would be so affected by it, he would leave all his Madrasah duties and remain engrossed in spiritual activities.

All the above incidents demonstrate that Hadrat Wālā was attached to Sufism and books on this subject since his student days; and that he also experienced some lofty states such as fear and uprightness. In addition to this, he was infuriated by pseudo-Sufis and extremists. I recall another incident in this regard. For some time during his student days he lived in a room which was attached to a musjid. It was an unfortunate coincidence that another room of the same musjid was inhabited by an extremist Sufi. Although Hadrat Wālā lived there for quite some time, he never spoke to him.

Conferring Religious Blessings To Allāh's Creation

To sum up, Hadrat Wālā had a deep interest in the spiritual path from a young age when he was still a student. He was

occupied in dhikr after pledging bay'ah in 1299 A.H. but focussed more attention to it after 1307 A.H. – as mentioned previously from his letter dated 22 Muharram 1308 A.H. He was very much affected by dhikr and even asked Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's advice on giving up his teaching post. This is gauged from the contents of his fourth letter. He did not get permission to give up his post because of the religious benefits which came with this post. A portion of this letter is quoted below to clarify this point:

> Your honourable letter of fragrance has arrived. Your progress of yearning and longing has brought a lot of joy and happiness. May Allāh *taʿālā* grant you additional blessings. Forsaking employment is inappropriate. This is applicable only to the one who does not have the responsibility of a family. It is unwise to let the family become uneasy. Instructing and guiding people is the closest way to reach Allāh *taʿālā*.

The above letter is dated 22 Muharram 1308 A.H. He states in his fifth letter dated 13 Safar 1308 A.H. : "May Allāh *taʿālā* quench you with a rain of love and keep you longing for more." This also demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's intense thirst and longing of that time.

It becomes clear from the above incidents and conditions that Hadrat Wālā was occupied with academic work and teaching the external sciences from 1301 to 1308 A.H. Countless students qualified under him during this period, many of them departed with Hadīth certificates, and thousands among the masses benefited from his lectures and talks.

Details with regard to his teaching and travelling around to deliver lectures were provided in previous chapters. There is no need to repeat them here. However, it will not be out of place to state that Hadrat Wālā used to explain very difficult and intricate issues in a very simplified manner. The students would not even realize that it was a complex point and they used to be astonished when they realized it later on. As for his public lectures, he used to stand and deliver them for as long as five, six and even seven hours at a time. Even then, the audience was not satisfied and wanted more. All the Muslims of Kānpūr – including those holding different beliefs – were enamoured by his oratory and people of every district

requested him to come and address them. Once, he delivered talks for two months only on the subject of salāh. He went to each district and area and spoke on salāh. Subsequently, so many people began performing salāh that there was no place in the masājid. People became so enthusiastic about salāh that even the rickshaw-pullers would constantly ask their passengers the time so that they could go and perform their salāh.

Hadrat Wālā's stay in Kānpūr caused a stir in Islamic sentiments in the surrounding areas as well. Periodically, he used to print posters and booklets on important and essential rules and regulations. I recall something from my childhood. I was living in Ūr'ī, district Jālūn, which is my second hometown and is about 80 miles from Kānpūr. Some posters of this nature reached our town. My father was so impressed by the contents that he even shortened his pants which was previously below his ankles. As for timetables for dawn and sunset, posters on rules of fasting, sacrificial animals, etc. these used to come to our town from Hadrat Wālā's Madrasah all the time.

Attraction Towards Spiritual Abundance

After this external abundance, Allāh *taʿālā* willed for the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to receive spiritual abundance through Hadrat Wālā. After all, the Dīn cannot be perfected without the spiritual aspect. Consequently, his heart suddenly perceived a powerful pull, and the enthusiasm for dhikr which had been present from the beginning now surged ahead with full force. The flame of love for Allāh *taʿālā* which had been placed in him from the very beginning, which was lying dormant in his heart at the time of his birth, whose sparks were seen in the form of tahajjud salāh in the late hours of the night when he was still a minor and in the form of an intense desire to pledge bayʿah when he was a student, and his engrossment in spiritual exercises during his days as a teacher – flickered from time to time in a superficial manner. The time had now come for it to manifest itself in all its glory. It did not confine itself to encompassing Hadrat Wālā alone but the entire world. It is continuing in its path and, all praise is due to Allāh, intensifying by the day. O Allāh! Increase it, make it all-encompassing, and perfect it.

This enthusiasm and fervour commenced in 1307 A.H. as we had mentioned previously by quoting from *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah*.

Hadrat Wālā's Uncle, Pīrjī Imdād 'Alī

On one side, Hadrat Wālā's flame of love was burning swiftly, while on the other side the vast distance between himself and his shaykh came as a barrier and caused him intense restlessness. Hadrat Wālā was immersed in this confusion and uncertainty when his maternal uncle, Pīrjī Imdād 'Alī Sāhib, who was a well-known and powerful dervish, left Hyderabad for his hometown and happened to pass through Kānpūr. He knew that Hadrat Wālā was residing in Kānpūr and was overcome by a desire to meet him. Pīrjī had a very carefree temperament so he went and stayed over in a lodge. He sent a message to Hadrat Wālā: "If you do not consider it below your dignity, you may come and meet me in the lodge. I haven't seen you since childhood and wish to see you."

When Hadrat Wālā was still very young and was memorizing the Qur'ān, he had met Pīrjī at a function in Kīrānah. Hadrat Wālā attended the function with his father. Pīrjī had asked Hadrat Wālā to recite one section of the Qur'ān and prayed for him. They did not get an opportunity to meet after that because Pīrjī had settled down permanently in Hyderabad. Due to his carefree and ascetic nature, he rarely had an opportunity to come to his hometown [Thānah Bhawan].

Pīrjī possessed an intense and burning love [for Allāh *ta'ālā*]. He was totally carefree and had no contact with friends and relatives. He was naturally daring, audacious and happy-go-lucky. To add to this, he found a shaykh who was also an ascetic and carefree. Consequently, he would often say with full pomp and pride: "Listen! I am free and I am the slave of a free person."

All the above points collectively made him like the dervishes who belonged to the Malāmatīyyah sect. Or, in the words of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, among the Auliyā' Mustahlikīn (Sufis who sought to destroy themselves). But by and large, Pīrjī was carefree in his words [not in actions]. He also took part in 'urs and samā'. He was very particular about salāh and fasting, and his conversations were extremely wise and meaningful. He used to engage in intensely strenuous spiritual exercises and

forms of spiritual exertion. The heat of love within him was so intense that sitting near him would ignite a person's heart, create an aversion for the world and a dislike for all contact with people. However, some of his statements and actions needed some sort of explanation in order to coincide them with the Sharīʿah. And sometimes, even the explanations had to be far-fetched. Despite all this, he was sincere in whatever he did. He was neither a show off nor a materialist.

He was a serious dervish and therefore practised samāʿ. He was so immersed in it that he would carry his instruments of samāʿ wherever he went. This is the general habit of dervishes who practise samāʿ.

Pīrjī Goes To Hadrat Wālā's Madrasah

On one hand, Pīrjī's life and condition were as described above. On the other side, Hadrat Wālā was a famous ʿālim who adhered strictly to the Sunnah. This is why Pīrjī had sent this message: "If you do not consider it below your dignity, you may come and meet me in the lodge." This was also the reason why he did not go to stay with Hadrat Wālā and, instead, stayed over in a lodge. Look at his consideration for 'ulamā' despite his carefree disposition!

The moment Hadrat Wālā heard of his uncle's arrival, he went to the lodge to meet him. Hadrat Wālā insisted on him to come to his house because he could not allow such a senior guest to live in a lodge. Based on his carefree temperament as described above, Pīrjī said: "Miyā! You are a practising ʿālim. Do not take me to your place. People will remark: 'Who is this vagabond and scoundrel whom you brought to your house?'" Hadrat Wālā did not pay any heed to him and took him with. Pīrjī proceeded to Hadrat Wālā's house with all his luggage and possessions, including his samāʿ instruments.

The people in the Madrasah were initially astonished, but when Pīrjī started his conspicuous dervish talks, he ignited the hearts of all. They were captivated and enamoured by him and convinced him to remain for several days with them. Hadrat Wālā relates: "My uncle possessed intense heat and fervour. When he spoke, it seemed as if fire was emanating from his mouth." The following couplet applied to him:

> I am a slave of speech which ignites a fire. Do not speak of things which extinguish a raging fire.

Hadrat Wālā's heart had been ignited from before. Pīrjī's fiery speech and passionate demeanour only served to enflame the fire even more. Hadrat Wālā unintentionally developed an intense urge in his heart to acquire the love of Allāh *taʿālā* from him, no matter how. He will then retract and focus his full attention to dhikr and spiritual exercises. If a person is completely dehydrated out of thirst in a desert, and he sees muddy water in a hole, will he be able to restrain himself from drinking it despite its muddiness!? Will he think to himself that he should wait and when he reaches home, he will drink cold and pure water? Will he do this if his house is still very far away? When a person is intensely thirsty, he even considers sand to be water and hastens towards it. So water was presented to him, although it was muddy. How could he exercise patience and not run towards it!? After all, it [muddy water] is also pure and also beneficial to a certain degree. Maulānā Rūmī says in this regard:

> If a morsel which is covered with soil can also make
> a person mad, what would it do had it been pure!

This is especially so when the soil settles at the bottom and the water comes up purified, and is a manifestation of the saying:

خذ ما صفا ودع ما كدر

Take what is pure and discard what is filthy.

According to Hadrat Wālā, there is a parallel to the above story in the books of jurisprudence. Initially, Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* had given permission to perform ablution with date water.[1] He quoted the following Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as proof:

تمرة طيبة وماء طهور

It is a wholesome fruit and its water is pure.

Another narration states:

تمرة حلوة وماء عذب

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[1] Water in which dates are soaked and eventually made into an intoxicating drink. This is known as *nabīdh bī at-tamr*.

It is a sweet fruit and its water is sweet.[1]

This could be a clear basis for the above example of water mixed with soil in the sense that the soil is wholesome and the water is pure. Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* did not permit tayammum in the absence of pure water. Instead, he passed the ruling of ablution with date water. Similarly, in the absence of the pure Sufi path, mere external spiritual exercises were not considered sufficient. Instead, preference was given to muddy water. Furthermore, just as it is obligatory to give up using date water once pure water is found, I discarded the muddy path the moment I gained access to pure Sufism. Besides, the muddy path is similar to date water in the sense that both have the ability of causing undesired intoxication. Finally, Imām Abū Hanīfah's last opinion was the impermissibility of ablution with date water and the obligation of tayammum because there is a possibility of this ruling not coinciding with the principles of the Sharīʿah. In the same way, my final analysis is that as long as the pure Sufi path is not found, it is obligatory to confine one's self to the external spiritual exercises, and it is not permissible to choose the adulterated path because of the dangers it entails.

Hadrat Wālā Reverts To Pīrjī

Anyway, Hadrat Wālā saw that his shaykh is in a distant land, across the ocean. While here he is experiencing an intense and hasty quest, and his heart is demanding to find its objective [Allāh *taʿālā*] no matter how. The means for fulfilling this objective seemed to be right before his eyes. He therefore turned to Pīrjī unwittingly and reverted to him due to his close relationship with him. He expected special attention from him because Hadrat Wālā was like a son to him, and there was an obvious bond and affinity between the two. However, by virtue of the blessings, relationship and companionship of the ʿulamā' and elders, Hadrat Wālā ensured that he remains firm on the principle: "Take what is pure and discard what is filthy."

Hadrat Wālā was quite broad minded and had noble thoughts especially about dervishes. Apart from this single time during the early stages of his life, and that too because of the above-mentioned intense quest which he was experiencing and –

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[1] Narrated by Ahmad, Dāraqutnī and Ibn Mājah.

according to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib – because he was still a novice as regards the complexities of the path, caused him to revert to Pīrjī. The following stanzas of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* apply to his reverting.

> O friends! Do not point fingers at a dissatisfied and confused person like me. I have a pearl and am searching for an expert.
>
> Although it is detestable to dye a tattered garment red, I do not consider it detestable because I wash off the colour of ostentation through it.
>
> An admonisher instructed me not to smell the soil at the door of the tavern. Tell him not to find fault with me because I am inhaling the fragrance from the land of Khutan.[1]

Hadrat Wālā's Reasoning

Hadrat Wālā relates the reason for reverting to Pīrjī and the emotions which he was experiencing at the time in a letter which he wrote to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* in order to express his excuse. Hadrat Wālā wrote it in Arabic so that it may remain concealed from the masses who lack understanding. Every word of his letter is immersed in emotion. A few sentences which are appropriate to this discussion are quoted here. The original text is quoted for further clarification.

فيا مولانا، والله إني كنت في ذلك الزمان غريقاً في بحار الحيرة والطلب، واتطلع إلى من يخلصني من ذاك والوصب والنصب، إذ نادى مناد من قريب من غير إرادتي وقصدي: هات يدك بيدي أنجيك من هذا البحر الحجر. وإن الغريق يتثبت بكل حشيش لما هو فيه من التهويش والتشويش. وقد كنت من وراء البحار من حبيبي ومغيثي وطبيبي، ومع هذا ما تركت بحمد الله يوما العمل بقول الأكابر: خذ ما صفا ودع ما كدر.

O Maulānā! During those days, I was drowning in the ocean of bewilderment and searching for someone who could rescue me from that suffering and hardship. Suddenly a very close caller called out to me without any intention and will from my side. He said: "Give my your hand and I will rescue you from this rocky

[1] A district in Turkistan famous for musk.

ocean." A drowning man clutches at every straw out of excitement and confusion. Furthermore, I was oceans away from my beloved, my saviour and my physician. Despite all this – all praise is due to Allāh - I never, for once, lost sight of the advice of the elders when they said: "Take what is pure and discard what is filthy."

Commencement Of Burning Love

The natural consequence of the above conditions resulted in Hadrat Wālā reverting to his affectionate uncle and commencing in dhikr and spiritual exercises with particular attention. The year 1307 A.H. marks the next stage in his life. The previous stage was that of academic interest, this new stage was that of burning love.

The commencement of dhikr and spiritual exercises transformed Hadrat Wālā completely. His attachment to spiritual occupations increased to the extent that he developed an aversion for all interactions. He even wrote to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and asked him if he could give up his employment. However, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib advised him to give preference to serving Allāh's creation and did not permit him to resign from his employment. The time was not right as yet; there was a need to establish himself. As per Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's instruction, he continued teaching but also occupied himself in dhikr and spiritual exercises.

Departing To Meet Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

By the year 1310 A.H. his yearning to reach Allāh *taʿālā* increased to the extent that it created a restlessness and burning desire in him. The intensity and urgency of his quest did not permit him any peace. This condition is defined by the Sufis as *shauq* (yearning). Under the circumstances, he constantly thought of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's request when he had presented himself to him the first time: "Ashraf ʿAlī, stay with me for six months." This request remained concealed in Hadrat Wālā's heart for ten years because he could not fulfil it in the presence of the rights which he owed to his father. Details in this regard were provided previously.

Hadrat Wālā's present condition made him perceive the urgent need to fulfil the above request. Moreover, the demise of his father removed that obstacle. He therefore turned all his

attention to making preparations for absenting himself from his teaching obligations so that he could spend some time in Makkah Mu'azzamah. He succeeded quite quickly in this regard because the intense yearning, excessive and powerful burning desire, strong craving to reach his objective, urgency to traverse the path, the pull and magnetism of love – or, in reality, Allāh's own pull – removed all the obstacles and impediments from his path. By the help of Allāh *ta'ālā*, the desire which could not be realized for the last ten years was now completed very easily and without any problems within a few months.

Hadrat Wālā departed for Makkah Mu'azzamah with the intention of remaining in the company of his shaykh for six months. He seemed to be demonstrating the following panegyric of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh*:

> When I decide to go to the alley of my beloved, I will spread its fragrance with my breathing.
>
> I will sacrifice my honour which I acquired through my intelligence and Dīn for the soil which is on the path of this most beautiful beloved.
>
> Whatever time of my life which passed without drink and the beloved was wasted. I will remain occupied in my work from today.
>
> I will lose myself in the remembrance of your eyes, and strengthen the foundations of past times.
>
> O Hāfiz! The sincerity of the heart cannot be acquired through competition and exhibition. Instead, I will choose the path of love and intoxication [in Allāh's love].

Hadrat Wālā's enthusiasm and yearning was as described by Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh*:

> In my desire for my beloved, I will intoxicate myself and go dancing like an atom towards the brilliant fountain of the sun.
>
> I have never travelled from my hometown. But now I desire travelling to you out of love for you.

In short, Hadrat Wālā presented himself before Hadrat Hājī Sāhib with absolute yearning, and remained engrossed in

spiritual abundance with full enthusiasm. The moment he reached there, all his restlessness and trembling which he had been experiencing for some time were now transformed into peace and tranquillity. A condition which the Sufis refer to as *uns* (affinity) now came to the fore.

Special Attention

Based on the special spiritual relationship by which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was impressed, he had personally requested Hadrat Wālā to come to Makkah Muʿazzamah. When he did present himself the first time, he personally requested Hadrat Wālā to stay with him for six months. So he was yearning to meet Hadrat Wālā from before, and now that he reached Makkah Muʿazzamah, he was completely overjoyed. Although there is no comparison, we could say it was like the joy which Hadrat Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām* experienced when he was rejoined by Hadrat Yūsuf *ʿalayhis salām*. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib now directed his special attention and favours towards Hadrat Wālā. His special affection towards him caused others to become jealous – to the extent that Hadrat Wālā says: "I used to think that it would be better if Hadrat Hājī Sāhib did not direct so much of attention to me in the presence of others." Hadrat Wālā eventually felt so threatened by the envious ones that he cut short his stay by about ten days from his original six months. He thought to himself that he is presently accepted in Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's sight. It must not happen that the enviers cause Hadrat Hājī Sāhib to have ill feelings towards him. He should rather leave while he is happy with him.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Confidence

On one side we have Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's strong ability to convey, and on the other side we have Hadrat Wālā's ability to receive and derive benefit. Consequently, within a few days this resulted in a strong affinity between the two, and Hadrat Hājī Sāhib spontaneously remarked: "You are totally on my way." As we had mentioned before, when Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had the occasion to hear Hadrat Wālā's lecture or read any of his writings, he would say: "May Allāh reward you. You have expounded on what is in my chest." If, in the course of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib delivering a discourse, someone had to pose a good question, he would point towards Hadrat Wālā and say: "Ask him. He has understood it very well." He used to say this

although, as in Hadrat Wālā's own words: "I used to sit silently with absolute respect before Hadrat. Very rarely did I have any need to say anything."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's spiritual insight! Through the light of his understanding and far-sightedness, he could fathom Hadrat Wālā's intelligence and astuteness. And look at the extent of the envy! Despite Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's clear instruction, no one reverted to Hadrat Wālā to answer the question which they had posed. By virtue of the intense affinity between the two, we could say that Hadrat Wālā became a manifestation of the following couplet:

> I became you and you became me. I became the body and you became the life so that, after this, no one will be able to say that I am a separate person and you are a separate person.

Complete Affinity Between Mentor And Disciple

I recall another incident with regard to affinity. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib wanted to write an advisory letter to Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān Marhūm. Several people prepared rough letters as per Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's instruction but none of them appealed to him. He then asked Hadrat Wālā to compose a letter and, when he did, he really approved of it. But some people raised a useless objection that Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān will assume that it was written under the instruction of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* and this assumption will be detrimental to him. They added that it was unwise to send the letter. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was very soft by nature and, as per his habit, said: "Very well, as you say." The letter was not sent. On several occasions later on, he said: "Had that letter been sent, there would have been hope for his reformation, but our friends did not feel the same way."

(Note: This letter has been published towards the end of Hadrat Wālā's book, *Islāh al-Khiyāl*).

Translation of *Tanwīr* And Blessings In His Time

During his stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah, Hadrat Wālā translated the book, *Iksīr fī Ithbāt at-Taqdīr*, under the instruction of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. Whatever Hadrat Wālā translated in a day would be read to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib that same day. Hadrat would be most pleased with the translation

and say: “You must try to translate more because Allāh *taʿālā* has blessed you in your time.” Subsequently, this prediction proved to be true to the letter. Hadrat Wālā’s numerous written works bear testimony to this. On one occasion, he received almost fifty letters at once. When he completed replying to all and the time that it took him was estimated, it worked out to less than two minutes per letter. This, despite the fact that he receives lengthy letters which take up a lot of time just to read, and even more to reply. In most cases, the blessing in his time – which was from Allāh *taʿālā* – took the form of being safeguarded from occasions, incidents and events when he was engrossed in an important religious task. For example, when he received an extra number of letters, a fewer number of people would come to him for amulets. Consequently, on the above-mentioned occasion when he received fifty letters and was busy replying to them, not a single person came to him for an amulet. Hadrat Wālā made special mention of this to those who were present and expressed his gratitude to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Wālā relates with regard to the period when he was writing *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur’ān*: “By Allāh’s grace, during this lengthy period of two and a half years, I did not experience the slightest touch of an illness and did not miss out a single day. I did not even complain of any slight cold or fever although Thānah Bhawan was specifically experiencing a plague for some time. It did cause inconvenience to a certain extent because I used to attend many funerals and burials. But it was not so serious to the extent that I could not make up for it later on. During this period, I used to pray to Allāh *taʿālā* I must not die before I complete the *Tafsīr*.”

Another reason for the blessing in Hadrat Wālā’s time was that when he used to sit down to write anything, the thoughts and subject matter used to just flow into him immediately. I have observed him replying to very confusing letters in a simple, satisfying and convincing manner. When it came to writing on complex academic issues, he would explain them with a flowing pen. Despite this, it was so comprehensive in nature that no essential point or most minute matter was left out.

Blessing in his time also took the following form: If he had to search for any material on a particular subject, the place where he could find it would come to his mind immediately; or his

eyes will fall on the exact spot he was looking for just by flipping through a book.

Apart from following a strict timetable, proper organization and absence of uncertainty being the most important contributors to the blessing in his time, a very important contributor was that when he commenced a task, his heart would develop a restlessness and impose on his temperament as long as the task was not completed. There were times when he spent almost entire nights trying to complete some of his books without taking a single minute's rest. I personally saw this on a few occasions during my stay in the Khānqāh.

Hadrat Wālā says: "Even if I do not get the inspiration to engage in Allāh's remembrance, I would make an effort to empty my heart so that if I do get the inspiration, I would at least be able to direct it easily towards His remembrance and I will not have any obstacle from turning to Him at that time. This is why I get disturbed by confusing talks, thus causing a change in me. I like for a conversation to be terminated quickly so that I may regain my focus as quickly as possible and not remain stuck at one point. People are in the habit of long, drawn out and confusing conversations, leaving me unnecessarily stuck at one point."

By Allāh's grace, Hadrat Wālā would rarely fall ill. Even if he does encounter a complaint, by Allāh's grace, it is removed quite quickly. Very often we noticed lengthy illnesses which normally remain with a person for several months leaving Hadrat Wālā within a few days without causing him much disturbance in his work. Hadrat Wālā has so much of work that if he were to leave it for a few days, it would not be possible for him to complete it. People always see Hadrat Wālā occupied in some work or the other all the time. In fact, it is most astonishing to observe him carrying out several tasks at once. He is often seen reading the Qur'ān from memory, while he is busy replying letters. The seekers too are experiencing the effects of his focus on them, while he himself is not for a moment unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā*. Then you see him deep in thought over complex rulings and injunctions which are presented to him quite often. He would often say: "I understood such and such ruling while I was walking", "I understood such and such ruling while I was in salāh", "The solution to such and such objection was realized while I was doing such and

such thing" and so on. Allāh *taʿālā* also helps him from the unseen in the sense that he rarely falls ill – as mentioned above – and when he does fall ill, then as far as possible he does not leave his work aside unless he is totally compelled.

Incidentally, today – 19 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1353 A.H. – while I was writing on this subject, Hadrat Wālā was experiencing a severe pain in his stomach. The pain was rising up to his kidney, but he bore it and led the people in the fajr salāh without letting anyone know about it. Everyone was surprised over the fact that – contrary to his norm – he read very short sūrahs in the salāh and then continued with his work. It was only after eight that his attendants came to know that he resorted to a heat pack and other measures through which all the pain disappeared within an hour. Hadrat Wālā then presented himself for his morning assembly and roused the seekers. Although he had experienced a very severe pain, Allāh *taʿālā* removed it very quickly. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. When the pain left him, Hadrat Wālā addressed the people and said: "Since I am not used to such pains, a short spell of pain causes me so much of weakness that I feel as if I had been ill for several months. I could feel the pain creeping right through me but Allāh *taʿālā* quickly showered His grace on me."

This entire subject on blessing in Hadrat Wālā's time came in just by the way. I now return to incidents related to the attention, focus and glad tidings which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib showered on Hadrat Wālā.

Exposition Of Tauhīd

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā imbibed all spiritual treasures by remaining in the company of his shaykh. However, in the course of his stay with him, the exposition of tauhīd reached its peak. Tauhīd is the foundation of the Sharīʿah and Tarīqah, and the core of Sufism. Its necessary outcome is servitude which is the highest station in the path. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib specifically possessed these treasures which have been the hallmarks of the Imdādīyyah family, and – by the permission of Allāh *taʿālā* – transferred totally and perfectly from his chest to the chest of Hadrat Wālā and passed it on forever in this way. The effects of this transferral are glaringly seen to this day in Hadrat Wālā's statements, actions, deeds, conditions, movements and moments of inactivity. The

blessings of Hadrat Wālā which have spread in the East and West are actually rays and splendours of that same sun and moon.

An Ode

Hadrat Wālā was so overcome by tauhīd during his stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah that he even composed an emotional ode which contained nothing but themes of tauhīd. Although the meanings were acceptable, he retracted from it because it was written while he was overcome by emotion and was not a true depiction of the obvious. Bearing in mind he retracted from it, he did not permit me to include it here. But I obtained his permission to include two simple lines at this point.

> I could not find him as long as vanity was in me. Once I searched and found him, I myself became non-existent. O Āh! What was your worth? Whatever you have now is on account of Imdād's quest and generosity.

Hadrat Wālā uses "Āh" as his pen name in this ode. It demonstrates the extent to which he was overpowered by burning love for Allāh *taʿālā*. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was most impressed by the ode because it was a true reflection of Hadrat Wālā's condition. When some spiritual masters came to visit him, he requested Hadrat Wālā to render it before them. On completing its rendition, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib said to the guests: "These are not just his words but his real condition."

The Book, *Anwār al-Wujūd*

Also during his stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah, Hadrat Wālā wrote a book on the issue of tanazulāt-e-sittah which was specifically connected to tauhīd wujūdī (unity of existence) The book was titled *Anwār al-Wujūd fī Atwār ash-Shuhūd*. A section of this book is devoted to investigating the comprehensiveness of man. Hadrat Wālā read these themes to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib who was extremely overjoyed when he heard them, and said: "You have expounded my chest completely." This statement clearly demonstrates that the special thing which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had placed in Hadrat Wālā's chest was tauhīd. I recall one other incident which occurred during this period.

An Explanation Of Wahdatul Wujūd

Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Hasan Sāhib was a hajj guide in Makkah Mu'azzamah. He expressed his reservations about the issue of wahdatul wujūd (unity of existence) to Hadrat Wālā by saying: "It appears to be in direct conflict with īmān." Hadrat Wālā said: "You must come to me one day and I will explain it to you. Allāh willing, you yourself will agree that a person's īmān cannot be complete without believing in it." Subsequently, Hadrat Wālā explained it to him one Friday morning for two continuous hours. At the end of it, he got up and said: "The necessity of it has been proven in such a manner that īmān cannot be realized without it." Hadrat Wālā had restricted it to completion of īmān, but this Maulānā now went one step further by saying that īmān is dependent on this belief. The Maulānā went happily to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and related the incident to him. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib responded cheerfully: "Yes indeed, he [Hadrat Wālā] understands this subject very well."

Intense Servitude

I recall one other incident which was related by Hadrat Wālā himself and which occurred during the same time. Qārī 'Abd al-Haqq Sāhib was holding a year-end jalsah for his madrasah so he insisted on Hadrat Wālā to deliver a speech. Hadrat Wālā considered it disrespectful to deliver a speech in Makkah Mu'azzamah so he declined. The people of the madrasah went to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib to intercede on their behalf, and Hadrat Wālā was now compelled to agree. When he reached the jalsah, a senior Makkan scholar, Muftī Muhammad 'Abbās was also present. Hadrat Wālā said: "How can I say anything in the presence of such a senior person?" The people were very enthusiastic about listening to Hadrat Wālā so they even got this scholar to intercede on their behalf. Hadrat Wālā had no alternative but to agree. The function commenced with a recitation from the Qur'ān. It was rendered in a very beautiful tone by a Turkish student. Hadrat Wālā relates: "I never heard such a touching and enchanting recitation in my entire life. The whole assembly was enveloped in silence. I had lost my senses and was breathing convulsively. When I was requested to deliver my speech, I said: 'If you really wanted me to deliver a speech, you should not have asked this boy to read the Qur'ān. I do not have the ability to speak now.' This was really

my situation. I was so affected by his recitation that I just could not speak. I had lost control over my hands and legs, my heart and my tongue. When the people looked at me, they too realized that I was definitely not in a position to address them at present."

The people had no cure for Hadrat Wālā's excuse so they could not do anything about it. Their desire to listen to him was left unfulfilled. In the first place, Hadrat Wālā did not even feel like delivering a speech there, so Allāh *ta'ālā* provided the means for him not to speak. This incident clearly demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's deep respect, and the pain and burning of his heart. These qualities stemmed from his intense servitude, exposition of tauhīd and awe for Allāh *ta'ālā*. All these were the results of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's blessed company and special attention.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Special Attention

I now relate some incidents which demonstrate Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's special attention towards Hadrat Wālā.

On one occasion Hadrat Wālā felt an intense urge to go and see Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, so he went to see him although it was his time of solitude. He explained the reason for coming at such an hour and apologized to him. Hadrat replied: "This time of solitude is reserved to keep away outsiders from coming to me, not for dear ones." They then continued conversing for some time.

Hadrat Wālā reached his shaykh's assembly a bit late on one occasion because he was gone to visit some graves and other places of interest [in Makkah]. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib waited for quite some time for his arrival and asked him the reason for his delay. Hadrat Wālā said: "I was gone to visit some of the holy places and graves." He replied: "You did very well. The places of the pious are substitutes for the pious."

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Assembly of Samā'

A person belonging to the Shādhilīyyah Sufi Family invited Hadrat Hājī Sāhib together with his attendants. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib accepted on condition a samā' session is also held. Some of the attendants who were 'ulamā' hesitated about attending and excused themselves. But Hadrat Wālā joined Hadrat Hājī Sāhib without any hesitation. When the attendants were speaking among themselves, Hadrat Wālā said: "I will certainly

attend. I am not more pious than Hadrat. If Hadrat is attending, how can we hesitate!?”

Anyway, Hadrat Wālā joined in. On reaching there and before the food could be dished out, the attendants of the shaykh were standing in a circle. One of them who was known as the Munshid, commenced with the dhikr of one of Allāh’s names. Others in the circle joined him and they continued repeating the name. They all fell silent after some time. The Munshid then rendered a few lines of poetry on love for Allāh *taʿālā*. He had a plain but pleasing tune. He was an elderly person. He then commenced with another one of Allāh’s names and the others joined in. They continued the dhikr in this manner. In short, it was not an assembly of samāʿ but an enjoyable assembly of dhikr. When everything was over, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib asked Hadrat Wālā: “Did you enjoy it?” He replied: “Hadrat, I enjoyed it thoroughly.” Hadrat Hājī Sāhib said: “This is what you call samāʿ. Our friends [who did not join us] hesitated unnecessarily. I had purposefully laid down the condition of samāʿ when we were invited so that I could demonstrate what the limit of samāʿ is.”

Preserving Hadrat Wālā’s Rank

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was most pleased by Hadrat Wālā’s unhesitating participation, as opposed to some of the other ʿulamāʾ attendants who did not. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was very concerned about preserving Hadrat Wālā’s rank and dignity. Hadrat Wālā’s family had arrived in Makkah after him. They unknowingly appointed an unknown hajj guide. Hadrat Wālā now had to go to the chief hajj guide to change their guide. The chief was well-known for his temper. When Hadrat Wālā returned from there, the first thing Hadrat Hājī Sāhib asked him with a bit of trepidation was: “First tell me, how did he treat you?” Hadrat Wālā replied: “Through Hadrat’s attention and prayers, he received me very warmly and made the necessary arrangements for a guide as I wanted.” Hadrat was very happy to hear this. After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: “Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was very concerned about anyone looking with scorn at any of his associates. He was very affectionate and most concerned about his attendants.”

You Must Remain As I Am

Hadrat Wālā's senior wife and his maternal aunt reached Makkah Muʿazzamah while he was still there. His maternal aunt said to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib with regard to Hadrat Wālā: "You must pray for him so that he gets children." He went outside and said to Hadrat Wālā: "Your aunt requested me to pray for you so that you get children. I carried out her request but my heart desires that you remain as I am, you must be in the same condition as I am." He then went at length in speaking about the ills of the children of those days. Hadrat Wālā said: "I am pleased for myself whatever condition Hadrat likes for himself." That is, to have no children. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was very happy to hear it. This demonstrates the special bond which he had with Hadrat Wālā in the sense that he wanted him to be similar to him in every way.

Consequently, Hadrat Wālā has no children even though he entered into a second marriage. Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows what the future holds. This is the external similarity. As for the internal similarity, by Allāh's grace he is certainly bearing Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's ways.

When Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was giving leave to Hadrat Wālā, he said one thing with regard to his senior wife: "She must take just one lesson from me. Whatever you get, you must spend." This is exactly how her condition is. She neither experiences poverty nor does she amass anything. She is so content and generous that whatever Allāh *taʿālā* gives her and whatever she receives in her share, she spends it on her relatives and needy ones. She does not bother about poverty in the least. In fact, Hadrat Wālā stresses on her to spend for her own good. Just as he is very particular and organized about all other matters, he is very particular about spending. He does it with an open heart whenever the occasion demands. Despite this, something or the other gets amassed. He distributes it quickly to those who are eligible for it, spends in worthy causes and, in this way, gets it out of his ownership.

To sum up, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib desired Hadrat Wālā to be similar to him in every matter. Allāh *taʿālā* made him a true and complete deputy and representative of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's unique path and blessed an entire world through him. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable these blessings to continue and may He enable me to receive these blessings to the full. Āmīn.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Statement With Regard to Hadrat Wālā

A Maulānā of Nadwah complained to Hadrat Hajī Sāhib about Hadrat Wālā's lack of participation in the Nadwah programme and said that he is against them. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib refuted this immediately by saying: "He [Hadrat Wālā] does not even have an element of conflict in his temperament."

By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā is so averse to conflict and so broad-minded that, as far as possible, he tries to explain the statements and actions of even his opponents and always resorts to good thoughts about them even though he may not agree with them. Just the other day he was speaking about something and then added with much emphasis: "No matter how low the 'ulamā' may have stooped, I consider their presence for the continuity of Dīn so essential that even if they all unite to label me an unbeliever (kāfir), I will continue praying for their continued existence. Even though they may be fanatical on certain issues and speak ill of me, they are after all teaching the Qur'ān and Hadīth, and the Dīn is being maintained through them. I consider them to be a thousand times better than the ungodly claimants to Islam who are bent on getting rid off Islam. Allāh *taʿālā* knows that I have no personal motives in this broad-mindedness. Instead, the reason for it is nothing but upholding the limits of Dīn."

Hadrat Wālā's Broad-Mindedness

I recall another statement of Hadrat Wālā on this subject. He said: "I even feel sorry for those materialistic Sufis who are only concerned about eating and earning. I think to myself that they are of no use, so what else can they do? How else can they fill their bellies? All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* He provided for us because had He not, He alone knows what our condition and intentions would have been. May Allāh *taʿālā* save us from trials and tests. Although I rationally and doctrinally consider their ways to be evil, I naturally feel sorry for them. Consequently, instead of being only angry at them, my compassion towards them causes me to pray for their reformation and guidance. Although I detest their occupation of begging, I like their quality of praying for everyone. Apart from waiting for handouts from people, they are not engrossed in any conflicts, disturbances and sectarianism. They are only worried about their material gains. In the same way, although I

am doctrinally and to a large extent naturally averse to the unbelievers, I think to myself that there is wisdom in these conceptual matters, and therefore have a balance in my anger towards them. Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* makes reference to these wisdoms in the following couplet:

> Unbelief is necessary in the occupation of love for Allāh *taʿālā*. If there was no Abū Lahab, who will the Fire burn?

Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* also says in this regard:

> If unbelief comes from the Creator, there is wisdom in it. If it comes from us, it is an affliction.

I [the author] say: It is a most unique and extraordinary ability to be able to fulfil the rights of two opposites. The ability to combine two opposites is a mark of erudition.

My Grandson

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib displayed so much of affection towards Hadrat Wālā that if anyone were to point to him and ask: "Who is this?" He would reply: "This is my grandson." Hadrat Wālā relates: "Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had mentioned to me that we were distantly related. This is why he referred to me as his grandson. However, since this family relationship with him is totally insignificant in the face of the spiritual relationship which I have with him, I was neither interested in knowing about the family tie nor do I remember the details in this regard."

Special Address

Due to his intense liking for Hadrat Wālā, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib neither addressed him by the word "Maulwī" nor any other titles of respect. He used to merely address him as Miyā Ashraf ʿAlī. He advised him on several matters by addressing him in this manner. For example, he drank cold water one day and said: "Miyā Ashraf ʿAlī! When you drink water, ensure it is cold so that when you thank Allāh *taʿālā* verbally for it, your heart also joins in the thanks."

Glad Tidings About Expertise in Tafsīr And Tasawwuf

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib gave the following glad tiding to Hadrat Wālā: "You will have a special attachment with tafsīr and

tasawwuf." Hadrat Wālā's perfect affinity with these two sciences is clearer than the sun. His unparalleled tafsīr, *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, is testimony to the first. As for the second, all his written works testify to his expertise in this field. After relating this glad tiding, Hadrat Wālā says: "I blundered by not requesting him to pray for affinity with other religious sciences, especially Hadīth and jurisprudence."

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Library

When Hadrat Wālā was departing, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib wanted to hand over his entire library to him. But he, due to his intense thirst for spiritual abundance, said: "Hadrat! What is there in the books! What will I do with those books? You should rather give me some of the treasures from your blessed chest." Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was overcome and said: "Yes Miyā, yes! You are right. What is there in the books?"

> Cast a hundred books and a hundred pages in the fire. Make your chest into a garden with the light of Allāh.

Since Hadrat Wālā had refused out of his current spiritual condition, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib did not persist despite wanting to give his library to him. He did not want that condition to be extinguished. After some time, he had all the books parcelled and was about to send them to Hadrat Wālā with a person who was heading for India. However, some of those who were envious of Hadrat Wālā presented to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib a deed of endowment. They had taken his seal secretly and stamped the deed with it. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had no alternative, but he repeatedly said: "I do not recall ever placing these books as endowments." When he was on his death bed, he advised Maulānā Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib Kīrānwī to send the books to Hadrat Wālā. If he refuses to accept them, they must be handed over to Madrasah Saulatiyah [in Makkah]. Maulānā Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib wrote to Hadrat Wālā but the letter was lost in the post. The books were given over to Madrasah Saulatiyah. When Hadrat Wālā was informed later on, he said: "Even if I received the letter, I would have done the same thing [i.e. given the books to Madrasah Saulatiyah]."

My Mahīn Maulwī

After Hadrat Wālā returned to India, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib would constantly convey salām to him via the pilgrims who had come to perform hajj or ʿumrah. He used to say: "Convey my salām to my mahīn maulwī." The word mahīn refers to a person who is very particular, meticulous and of very fine temperament. This demonstrates Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's high level of spiritual insight because Hadrat Wālā used to sit absolutely silent in his assemblies. Despite this, he was able to fathom Hadrat Wālā's temperament so accurately.

Muslims Will Benefit Tremendously From You

On his return, Hadrat Wālā wrote a few books, e.g. *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl, Furūʿ al-Īmān*, etc. and sent them to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. He also took particular pains to send *Iksīr Tarjumah Tanwīr* by having it bound and writing his own couplet on the cover:

> I have presented an oyster shell to the ocean. I will be highly honoured and consider it a great virtue if the ocean accepts it from me.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was most pleased when he had a look at the books. He dictated a reply which read: "Inshā Allāh, Muslims will benefit tremendously from you." By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this prediction and prayer was realized to the letter.

Prayers And Glad Tidings In Absentia

Prayers, glad tidings and special words of the above nature are to be found in *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah.* Some of them are quoted in sequence here. Bearing in mind that these are mere quotations, the names of those who conveyed the letters, the dates of their arrival and other similar information which is to be found in the letters but is of no relevance to our subject will be removed. Such places will be left blank with dots. At the end of each quotation, its source together with the date will be mentioned so that a person of insight may be able to ascertain the different levels of Hadrat Wālā's spiritual progress.

1. You must always inform me of your condition and of any new condition which your associates experience. (Letter no. 1, dated 22 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1303 A.H.)

2. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable you to realize all your desires and fulfil all your wishes. Āmīn. (Letter no. 2, dated 15 Rajab 1304 A.H.)

3. May Allāh *taʿālā*…turn you away…from everything apart from Him and direct you solely towards Him. Āmīn.

I was overjoyed when I heard that you gave up studying medicine and returned to Kānpūr to occupy yourself in serving Dīn. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you in your services and enable all Muslims to benefit from your blessings. I had advised you previously to hold on firmly to Dīn, and the world will automatically be at your service in an excellent form. No matter what, you people are the inheritors of the Prophets. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred high positions to you by creating you for the guidance of His creation. You should therefore bear in mind your objective over everything else. (Letter no. 3, dated 12 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1306 A.H.)

4. Your honourable letter of fragrance has arrived. Your progress of yearning and longing has brought a lot of joy and happiness. May Allāh *taʿālā* grant you additional blessings. Forsaking employment is inappropriate. This is applicable only to the one who does not have the responsibility of a family. It is unwise to let the family become uneasy. Instructing and guiding people is the closest way to reach Allāh *taʿālā*. (Letter no. 4, dated 22 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1308 A.H.)

5. May Allāh *taʿālā* quench you with a rain of love and keep you longing for more. (Letter no. 5, dated 13 Safar 1308 A.H.)

6. I received your beloved letter and gift of recognition. It pleased me greatly and I am most thankful. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain you in His pleasure. You must remain occupied in your work; Allāh *taʿālā* is the one who guides and helps. It is nothing astonishing to turn soil into gold. A fakir is fully aware of his helpless condition. (Letter no. 6, dated 21 Dhū al-Hijjah 1308 A.H.)

7. I am concerned over the fact that I did not hear about your wellbeing and condition since quite some time. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain you in His pleasure and keep you under His protection. (Letter no. 8, date unknown)

8. Your letter…reached me. I am most grateful for it. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with progress in both worlds. Although

Maulwī Ah̲mad H̲asan S̲āh̲ib had informed me about your safe arrival in Kānpūr, I was waiting anxiously for your letter. All praise is due to Allāh, you and your companions reached safely. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless this journey of yours. Inform us of your conditions periodically. (Letter no. 9, dated 20 Rabīʿ al-Ākhir 1312 A.H.)

9. Your letter…reached me. I am most grateful for it. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with progress in both worlds and confer you with His love. All praise is due to Allāh, I am well. I am praying for you. You wrote about speaking about Allāh's bounties. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to make you an embodiment of: "If you are grateful, I will give you more." All praise is due to Allāh, I was very happy to hear this. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower the creation through you, bestow the blessings of the pious on you and confer you with His love. Shāh S̲āh̲ib is your Pīr Bhāi and a righteous man. Show mercy on his situation, and when he asks you anything with regard to dhikr, etc. you must tell him. Allāh *taʿālā* will be happy with you. (Letter no. 11, dated 18 Jumādā 1312 A.H)

10. I was very happy and grateful for receiving your letter. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with His pleasure, enthusiasm and a good death. Most of the time I am occupied in praying for you and for courage for you. (Letter no. 12, dated 12 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1312 A.H.)

11. I received your letter and the shajarah (spiritual family tree), and am most grateful for them. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with the blessings of the elders of the Spiritual Lineages. I and those who were present were most pleased at seeing it. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you happy. (Letter no. 13, dated 1 Dhū al-H̲ijjah 1312 A.H.)

12. I received your letter together with the gift of the leather prayer mat… I am most grateful. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with His love and pleasure. I request your prayers for a good death for me. (Letter no. 14, dated 23 Dhū al-H̲ijjah 1312 A.H.)

13. I received your letter together with a gift of five rupees. I am most grateful. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with His love, pleasure and a good death. May He bless you in your wealth and life. I did not hear from you for some time and was quite concerned. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you and me with a good death. (Letter no. 15, dated 1 Dhū al-H̲ijjah 1312 A.H.)

14. I had been waiting since many days for your letter. All praise is due to Allāh it reached me at the exact time when I was expecting it. I was extremely overjoyed at reading it. I am waiting in anticipation to see your two books. If you have already sent them, well and good. If not, send them immediately. (Letter no. 16, dated 8 S̲afar 1313 A.H.)

15. Peace be to you, my heart is with you. All praise is due to Allāh, I am well and pray to Allāh daily for your wellbeing. I was most pleased to receive your letter…May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you forever overflowing and intoxicated in His remembrance, yearning for Him and various spiritual ecstasies. I have both your books in front of me. You want to know whether you should print both or just one. It is left to you. Both are not without benefit. The best person is the one who is of benefit to people. I also received sample pages of *Tanwīr*. They were read to me and I thoroughly enjoyed them. You must inform me of the costs for printing *Tanwīr* – Allāh willing – we can send money from here as well. My wealth is always freely available for you.

You asked for my advice with regard to participating in Nadwatul 'Ulamā'.

> I will not tell you to do a particular thing or to abstain from doing something. Think of what is best and do what is easy.

Do what is conducive to your temperament. However, it is necessary for a seeker to sever himself from people. Allāh *taʿālā* personally showers on the one engaged in His remembrance. When a person experiences affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*, he recoils from the creation. The steps which were taken by yourself and Maulwī Mu<u>h</u>ammad <u>H</u>usayn <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib Allāhābādī seem to be most correct. (Letter no. 17, dated 8 Rabīʿ al-Ākhir 1313 A.H.)

16. I gave original copies of *Mathnawī* to you and to A<u>h</u>mad <u>H</u>asan <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib. You must keep it with you; Allāh *taʿālā* will bless you…I received the books *Iksīr* and *Anwār al-Wujūd fī At̲wār ash-Shuhūd* and was made aware of them in your letter. I felt overjoyed. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you. Inshā Allāh you will progress day by day. I am spiritually present with you all the time. I have accepted those who requested Bayʿah 'Uthmānī. May Allāh *taʿālā* give them success. Āmīn. You must teach

them some practices according to their capabilities. (Letter no. 18, dated 22 Jumādā 1313 A.H.)

17. I received your letter…It brought delight to me. Māshā Allāh, I was very pleased to hear about the enthusiasm and eagerness of you and your associates. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you forever engrossed in His remembrance, give you progress day by day and convey you to your fundamental objective. Āmīn. (Letter no. 19)

18. I make duʿā' for progress in your stages. Be rest assured that all will be accomplished according to your wishes.

19. I received all the gifts which you sent. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward you with the H̲aramayn Sharīfayn, enable you to dive in the ocean of love and bless you with the attainment of your objective. I am spiritually present with you all the time. Love from the heart is needed; everything is achieved through it. (Letter no. 21, date received 9 Muh̲arram 1314 A.H.)

20. I pray for an increase in your enthusiasm together with focus and satisfaction of the heart…Allāh willing, your temperament will experience rectitude and success, and your thoughts will become focussed. (Letter no. 23, dated 1313 A.H.)

21. I received your letter which included information about your spiritual conditions and various situations. The good news about your spiritual progress brought immense joy to me. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with more progress daily. I am always praying for you. Although I was not feeling too well, my heart was delighted at hearing about your spiritual condition and I could literally feel myself recovering. (Letter no. 27, dated 11 S̲afar 1314 A.H.)

22. I think of you all the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with the highest ranks and may your blessings continue forever. (Letter no. 26, dated 25 S̲afar 1314 A.H.

23. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you forever hale and hearty, and always occupied in His remembrance. Āmīn. As per your request, I admitted Maulwī Is-h̲āq ʿAlī S̲āh̲ib. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless him. You must teach him a few forms of dhikr and so on according to his capacity. (Letter no. 27, dated 5 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1314 A.H.)

24. The spiritual conditions and situations which you described in your letter are, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*,

excellent and praiseworthy. Inshā Allāh, you will make more progress, be rest assured. I always think of you. In my previous letter I had stated that if your heart is no longer attached to Kānpūr, it will be suitable for you to return to Thānah Bhawan which is, after all, your hometown. I did not mean that you must leave for Thānah Bhawan even if there is no need. Rather, I feel that as long as the people of Kānpūr are benefiting from you and they too are comfortable with you and listen to you, it does not appear good to leave and deprive the seekers there. Yes, if for some reason you are fed up and you want to leave Kānpūr, then it was my view that instead of going to any other place, you should rather go to Thānah Bhawan. (Letter no. 28, dated 12 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1314 A.H.)

25. I received your letter at the exact time when I had been waiting for it. It brought much joy to me. My heart is delighted at hearing about your spiritual conditions. These are thousands and thousands of favours of Allāh *taʿālā* for having given you this bounty. May Allāh *taʿālā* give you progress and also to all our beloved associates. Āmīn.

Māshā Allāh all your conditions are praiseworthy. Inshā Allāh, you yourself will gauge their praiseworthiness. Express thanks to Allāh *taʿālā* and constantly ask Him for more. You resorted to a lot of wisdom in the careful consideration which you gave about moving to Thānah Bhawan. Remain attached to Allāh *taʿālā* no matter where you are. The people of Kānpūr are deeply grateful to you and they are benefiting from you. So for all practical reasons, it seems most appropriate for you to remain there. Maintain your contact with Kānpūr for as long as Allāh *taʿālā* wills. You can then go to Thānah Bhawan after placing all your trust in Allāh *taʿālā* without entering into the employ of anyone. Allāh *taʿālā* is the Creator of the means, He will set right all your affairs. Allāh willing, you will not have to hesitate or doubt in any way. (Letter no. 29, dated 16 Jumādā 1314 A.H.)

26. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* all your conditions are excellent. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with progress. Āmīn. (Letter no. 30, dated 1314 A.H.)

27. I was overjoyed at receiving your letter at the exact time of waiting for it. I am most pleased at hearing about your spiritual conditions and those of your associates. May you

progress by leaps and bounds. (Letter no. 31, dated 21 Jumādā 1314 A.H.)

28. [This note is addressed to]: Miyā Maulwī Sayyid Is-hāq ʿAlī Sāhib: As-salāmu ʿalaykum. You have done well. I now advise you that instead of consulting me, you must consult Maulānā Sāhib [Hadrat Wālā] and do as he says. (Letter no. 33, dated 12 Ramadān al-Mubārak 1314 A.H.)

29. I was most pleased to hear about your spiritual conditions. Inshā Allāh, you will progress spiritually day after day, and Allāh's creation will derive tremendous benefit from you. I have special thoughts about you all the time…As-salāmu ʿalaykum to Maulwī Is-hāq ʿAlī Sāhib. The books *Diyā' al-Qulūb* and *Irshād Murshid* are available there. You must study them and refer to Maulānā [Hadrat Wālā] if you encounter any difficulties. You must consider Maulānā Sāhib to be in my place and remain engrossed in the different forms of dhikr which he prescribes. (Letter no. 34, dated 6 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1314 A.H.)

30. I was very happy to receive your letter. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with His pleasure… I gave a green cloak to Shāh Bahā' ad-Dīn. He will hand it over directly to you. Accept it from me. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with more knowledge and virtue with which Allāh's creation benefits the most, and may He cause your written works to be of use and accepted. I think of you constantly. I am ready to depart and I hope I depart with a good end…You must use the cloak for yourself. (Letter no. 35, dated 26 Dhū al-Hijjah 1314 A.H.)

31. It is best that you returned to Thānah Bhawan. I hope a large number of people benefit internally and externally from you, and that you re-inhabit our madrasah and musjid. I always pray for you and think of you constantly. (Letter no. 36, dated 12 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1315 A.H.)

32. I pray for your success in steadfastness and reliance in Allāh *taʿālā*. May He bless you with internal and external progress. (Letter no. 37, dated 6 Rajab 1315 A.H.)

33. To the one of lofty ranks, the choice of the seekers, the selected one from among those who reached Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat al-ʿĀlim al-Hāfiz al-Hāj al-Qārī Shāh Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī ath-Thānwī – may Allāh perpetuate his recognition and love. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I

received your letter which brought happiness to me and great joy to my heart. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with internal and external progress, and enable Allāh's creation to derive internal and external benefit from you. Āmīn. I pray all the time that a large number of Allāh's creation derives benefit from you and that your spiritual lineage continues. I was very happy to hear about the madrasah, musjid and rooms…These are my final days, I request you to pray for my good end. I have many books here. It would be good if you could come one more time. You will be able to meet me and at the same time, take all the books with you. If not, I will certainly send them with someone. (Letter no. 38, dated 16 Ramaḏān 1315 A.H.)

34. I was very happy to receive your letter. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable you to realize all your objectives in both worlds…There is no need for you mention to your love for me and thoughts about me; the heart finds a way to the heart of the other…I have admitted …into the spiritual family through Bayʿah ʿUthmānī. You must teach him the different forms of dhikr. You are sufficient. You have an open permission from me to show the different forms of dhikr to anyone who seek them… My thoughts are always directed towards you. (Letter no. 39, dated 11 Muẖarram 1316 A.H.)

35. May Allāh *taʿālā* include you among His devoted and sincere ones. (Letter no. 40, dated 12 S̲afar 1316 A.H.)

36. May Allāh *taʿālā* fulfil your wish. My heart is also extremely desirous of meeting you. (Letter no. 1, dated 4 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1312 A.H.)

37. This is an excellent spiritual condition. It is a station of gratitude. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to include you among His devoted and sincere ones. (Letter no. 42, dated 17 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1316 A.H.)

38. I also received two copies of *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl*. I am very impressed by this book. I pray that Allāh *taʿālā* blesses you with internal and external progress. (Letter no. 43, dated 1 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1314 A.H.)

39. I received your letter. All praise is due to Allāh, the condition of your heart is excellent. This is the station of fear and hope. It is referred to as *haybat wa uns*. Sometimes one overpowers the other, but both should be considered to be the same. (Letter no. 44, dated 1 Rajab 1316 A.H.)

40. I received your second letter as well. I wrote the answer in your first letter. I repeat: Your spiritual condition is excellent. Inshā Allāh you will not be harmed. I am praying…when you experience anything in your heart, consider it to be from Allāh *taʿālā*. Those that are harmful will be repulsed by this meditation. (Letter no. 45, dated 19 Rajab 1316 A.H.)

41. Your spiritual condition is excellent. I mentioned this previously…Pitfalls of this nature are normally experienced by a seeker. Inshā Allāh you will pass them all. I am praying for you (surely He is all-hearing, most near). (Letter no. 46, dated 8 Shaʿbān 1316 A.H.)

42. Māshā Allāh your spiritual condition is excellent. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you in it. Whatever little reservation remains will also be removed. I am praying to Allāh *taʿālā* to include you among His devoted and sincere servants…Both your books were read to me; I was very impressed by them. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable you to complete them. (Letter no. 47, dated 22 Shawwāl 1316 A.H.)

43. I received your letter. All praise is due to Allāh your condition is excellent. (Letter no. 48, dated 14 Dhū al-H̲ijjah 1316 A.H.)

44. All praise is due to Allāh your condition is now excellent. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to bless you with progress. I had received a letter from Kānpūr with reference to your stay there and had replied to it. I now write to you and say that it is essential for you to remain permanently in Thānah Bhawan. If you have some time during the holidays or at any other time when you feel like going there, you may visit and see to the people there. As for the seekers, they must come to Thānah Bhawan – it is not so far from Kānpūr. I wrote the same thing in my letter to the people of Kānpūr. (Letter no. 49, dated 15 Muh̲arram 1317 A.H.)

45. I was very pleased to receive your letter…I am gone so weak that it is difficult for me to turn from one side to the other. My only wish now is for Allāh *taʿālā* to summon me quickly from this temporary abode. I pray for all our associates. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable you to realize your wishes. I do not have the strength to talk…You must personally teach each

person according to his condition. (Letter no. 50, dated 20 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1317 A.H.)

From the above quotations from *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah* the reader must have gauged the special relationship which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had with Hadrat Wālā. There is no need for further explanation. What must have his level of love for Hadrat Wālā been when, after reading about Hadrat Wālā's spiritual progress in a letter, he even perceived a physical improvement from his illness. This was learnt from letter no. 21. Other incidents portraying his special attention will be related later at appropriate places.

Appointing Hadrat Wālā As His Deputy

It is a strange coincidence that in his last letter – after which he passed away within two months – Hadrat Hājī Sāhib instructed him: "You must personally teach each person according to his condition. In this way, he appointed Hadrat Wālā as his special representative and deputy just before he could depart from this world.

A Most Special Glad Tiding

While on the subject of letters, I recall one other incident. After reading about Hadrat Wālā's spiritual conditions in one of his letters, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib addressed one of those who were present with him and gave a very special glad tiding with reference to Hadrat Wālā. This glad tiding sets him on a very high pedestal and confers a special distinction to him. However, Hadrat Wālā prohibited us from relating it to anyone as long as he is alive. In short, the attention and bounties which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib showered on him and the nature of the bounties which were showered on him were not showered on any of his attendants. This is because divine will had already decreed for Hadrat Wālā to sit in Khānqāh Imdādīyyah, be the true representative of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, and be the instrument for spreading his teachings in the East and West. Subsequently, this is exactly what happened.

A prelude to the above was Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's statement which he made to Hadrat Wālā when the latter was returning to India. This will be related separately later on. He said: "Yes, if for some reason you are fed up and you want to leave

Kānpūr, then it was my view that instead of going to any other place, you should rather go to Thānah Bhawan.” When Hadrat Wālā eventually left Kānpūr and proceeded to Thānah Bhawan as per Hadrat Hājī Sāhib’s advice, he wrote to Hadrat Wālā saying: “It is best that you returned to Thānah Bhawan. I hope a large number of people benefit internally and externally from you, and that you re-inhabit our madrasah and musjid. I always pray for you and think of you constantly.” (Letter no. 36, dated 12 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1315 A.H.)

Similarly, he writes in Letter no. 38, dated 16 Ramadān 1315 A.H.: “Inshā Allāh, I pray all the time that a large number of Allāh’s creation derives benefit from you and that your spiritual lineage continues. I was very happy to hear about the madrasah, musjid and rooms…”

All these statements can be encapsulated by the following couplet:

> The Qalandar (erudite shaykh) only speaks after witnessing personally.

The lofty spiritual conditions of Hadrat Wālā which are observed today by the world were clearly seen by Hadrat Hājī Sāhib a long time ago through his insightful knowledge. We could either refer to this as insight and foretelling or the results of his prayers and wishes. Alternatively, we could consider the latter [prayers and wishes] to be the basis and the former to be the results. The sum of both is the same.

عباراتنا شتى وحسنك واحد – وكل إلى ذاك الجمال يشير

Our ways of expression are different but your beauty is one and the same. All our expressions point to that beauty.

In short, the spiritual treasures which were to be placed in Hadrat Wālā’s chest through the will and inspiration of Allāh *taʿālā* were all placed and handed over to him by Hadrat Hājī Sāhib during this short period of six months. He was given permission to accept bayʿah, appointed as his special representative and khalīfah, and assigned to the position of instruction and training.

The Mujaddid Assumes His Position

O Allāh! What a fortunate and blessed hour that was when a Qutb al-Irshād Hakīm al-Ummat Mujaddid Dīn wa Millat was

handed over the following responsibilities at the hands of a Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam:

1. Wiping out customs and innovations from the world of Islam and portraying it in its pristine form.

2. Removing Muslims from shortcomings and excesses and bringing them onto the straight path.

3. Causing rivers of knowledge and cognition to flow, and enabling all sections of the community to enjoy and derive benefit from these rivers.

4. Spreading internal and external blessings to the East and West.

5. Finding solutions to complex issues and solving difficult and intricate academic and practical rulings and injunctions.

6. Teaching Allāh's creation the correct etiquette of servitude and principles of social dealings, and turning Muslims into true Muslims and humans into true humans.

7. Displaying the beauty and constancy of Islamic education and culture to the world, shredding apart the covetous and deceptive veil of modern education and culture and exposing it, and visually displaying the concealed darkness of modernity.

8. Establishing the authority of people of Dīn in the hearts of worldly people, increasing the respect and dignity of Dīn, people of Dīn, knowledge of Dīn and the ʿulamā' of Dīn, and subduing those who were notorious for their arrogance and pride.

9. Proving the falsehood of modern doubts and objections on the very principles of logic and philosophy, and subduing celebrated claimants to logic and philosophy to submit before the injunctions, facts and beliefs of the Qur'ān and H̲adīth.

10. Compiling *Iʿlā' as-Sunan* – a collection of Ah̲ādīth in support of juridical rulings – and thereby increasing the honour and glory of jurisprudence.

11. Causing thousands of those who were negligent of s̲alāh to become regular performers of s̲alāh.

12. Convincing the devourers of interest to give up interest dealings, those earning unlawful income to give it up, and

influencing thousands of those immersed in internal and external sins to give them up by fulfilling the rights of those who have rights over them.

13. Treating chronic spiritual ailments through simple and accurate treatments, showing rare methods of rectification and unravelling intricate traps of the self.

14. Drawing attention to destructive dangers along the path and rescuing people from spiritual destruction.

15. Replacing the current cosmetic embellishments in Sufism with the original and time-honoured simplicity which has been coming down from generations.

16. Connecting the seekers with the pious predecessors and making them tread the long-abandoned path of the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

17. Bringing a smile to the crying ones and tears to the laughing ones through themes of encouragement and warning. And especially by reciting verses of glad tidings and mercy, and rekindling the hopes of thousands of those who had fallen into despondency.

18. Conveying countless seekers which included individuals from every strata of society and of every occupation to the True Beloved through the shortest route.

19. In short, he was appointed to the position of instruction through which he rendered every necessary service to every department of Islam – especially tafsīr and Sufism – in the most beautiful and effective manner.

20. This was no ordinary feat. In fact, bearing in mind that it was to renew the Dīn of Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and refute all repugnant customs and evil ancient innovations, it was the most important of all important events. It deserves countless congratulations and applauds, and thousands of thanks and joys. The following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* is applicable:

> The doe-eyed damsels of Paradise are dancing and handing out goblets out of thanks.

The following lines of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* are most applicable:

> The gentle morning breeze will spread the musk, and the old world will become new once again.

> The gentle morning breeze has come to give the good news to the old wine merchant that the season for singing, dancing, play, amusement and drinking has arrived.
>
> The breeze is here to revive the soul, the morning breeze is spreading the musk, the trees have become green and lush, and the birds are rejoicing.

Hadrat Wālā's various achievements and contributions were listed above so that his religious services may be viewed with a quick glance. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* this purpose has been achieved by the above list.

A Composition Written Out of Yearning

While thinking about Hadrat Wālā's religious achievements at this point, the yearning emotions of this insignificant author known as Majdhūb [Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Majdhūb] have been so awakened that I produced an entire composition – and that too – in the Persian language whereas I never studied Persian before. I did not even study a basic primer such as *Āmad Nāmah* nor did I ever have an occasion to write Persian poetry. Since I am so alien to Persian, it was not possible for me to turn any attention to it. I myself am astounded at how I was able to compile these lines. What else can I conclude apart from the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* had willed me to write in praise of Hadrat Wālā, so He caused an incapable person like myself to be sufficiently capable to carry this out.

The background to compiling these lines is that while I was writing this chapter a person came to me and requested me to add a few lines which make mention of Hadrat Wālā to the Persian Spiritual Family Tree (Shajarah) of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *quddisah sirruhu*. In this way, the associates of Hadrat Wālā could read these lines when reading the entire Shajarah.

I declined this request by offering the excuse of not knowing Persian. But the person persisted so I thought about it superficially. This resulted in my becoming like a mad man in the sense that ideas after ideas began flowing like rivers to the

extent that I had to forcefully stop my pen when I reached 100 lines. It seemed as if the following lines of Hadrat Wālā's maternal uncle, Janāb Pīrjī Wājid ʿAlī Sāhib – a very articulate Persian poet – were applicable to the letter.

> What kind of enthusiasm it must have been that the pen is dancing in his hand! We merely jabbed him in the side, and the beloved is dancing.
>
> On seeing the pen, he is twisting, turning and flying like a mad man; and writing themes of praise.

The following lines of Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* seem to apply here:

> In these times, my soul clung to my garment because it found the fragrance of the long shirt of Hadrat Yūsuf *ʿalayhis salām*.
>
> Now that I have mentioned his name, it becomes necessary to explain something about his gift.

Bearing in mind that my composition is appropriate to this section and based on it, I feel I should include it here after listing Hadrat Wālā's achievements and contributions. I hope that instead of the reader considering it to be lengthy and boring, he will consider it most appropriate. In fact – inshā Allāh – he will find it most enjoyable. This composition is divided into two: The first contains prayers and is titled, *Prayers of the Seekers in the Court of Allāh*. The second composition contains praises and is titled, *Calling on the Seekers to Return to the Truthful*. The two together are titled, *The Cry of Majdhūb*. There is a link between the two compositions, as will be ascertained. I felt it disrespectful to remove the first composition. Moreover, these prayers are beneficial and enjoyable, especially for the seekers and those treading the path. The entire composition is therefore presented to the reader.

The Cry of Majdhūb

Prayers of the Seekers in the Court of Allāh

> O Allāh! Have mercy on my terrible condition. Help me because the matter is not within my control.
>
> I fear my self and Satan with regard to my Dīn and īmān in every moment of my life.

Safeguard my heart through Your affectionate gaze so that it does not deviate from the straight path.

Apprise my heart with Your mysteries so that it does not go astray when treading the path of love.

Through Hadrat Shāh Ashraf ʿAlī who is Your noblest, loftiest and most high-ranking servant; remove pride and self-conceit from within me, and confer this despicable self with nobility.

Turn my self into a self which has acquired tranquillity, and save it from the whisperings of man and jinn.

Remove love for all apart from You from my heart. Make me totally unaware of the world by keeping me engrossed in Your remembrance.

Fill my heart with Your love in such a manner that I do not even consider a hundred kingdoms of Jamshed[1] to be of any worth.

Thousands of young and old have reached You. Thousands others have the honour of presenting themselves at Your door.

Confer an insignificant person like me the honour of presenting myself before You. Bestow peace to a restless person like me as well.

Show me the way. There are a hundred obstacles before me. There are veils within veils before me.

Pull me – who is fallen in these veils – out and make me Your lover and Your beloved.

O Allāh! Bless me with steadfastness. Bestow Your bounties on me. Bestow Your bounties on me. Bestow Your bounties on me.

Turn my life into a pure life, and make my death a pure death.

Keep me occupied with You as long as I am alive and give me salvation when I die.

---

[1] An ancient king of Persia.

Let my final moments in this world be good, and give me a place beneath the feet of Hadrat Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the eternal Paradise.

Calling on The Seekers to Return to The Truthful

O you who are praying! Do not confine yourself to praying. Pray and search for a guide as well.

When you are on this path, it is essential to have a guide who will convey you to your destination. It is a waste of time and energy to endeavour on your own.

However, there are very few guides in this world. There are many robbers in the guise of guides.

If you want to find the truth, do not seek it from every Tom, Dick and Harry.

Acquire the truth from Hadrat Ashraf ʿAlī because he is Allāh's proof for the people of the world.

His efforts have revived the Dīn. He is a true representative of the pious predecessors.

He was given the name of Ashraf from the unseen world. This is why he is certainly Ashraf – the noblest - in his time.

He is a sign and guide on the path of the Sharīʿah. He is an imām and leader for those treading the Tarīqah.

He is unparalleled in his external and internal knowledge. He is the super-specialist physician of the Muslim community and the Qutb of the time.

He is the treatment for the pains of the heart, and a cure for spiritual ailments.

He is better than every reformer of his time because he is a surgeon and also has the dressings for the wound.

When he becomes angry in order to teach manners, a hundred mercies are sacrificed for his one anger.

Externally he is an embodiment of Allāh's wrath and might. Internally he is an embodiment of His beauty.

His wrathful gaze is filled with love which creates love in other hearts.

His intoxicated gaze is like that of a stranger, but in essence, it bears concern for everyone.

His single cry of pain creates concern in a thousand hearts, and his one gaze intoxicates thousands.

When he lowers his gaze, he burns the world. When he smiles, he spreads gratitude.

There may be a smile on his lips, but his heart is crying. He does one thing externally, and something else internally.

What can I say about the condition of that well-wisher who is a unique combination of hope and fear?

A servant's condition is unique before him: there is crying in his laughter, and laughter in his crying.

His speech results in the rectification of thousands of people. His silence has a thousand meanings.

When he stands up to deliver a lecture, he scatters a great many pearls and flowers.

O you nightingale who reveals secrets! May your beak never be devoid of thanks.

Your heart has become the Mt. Ṯūr by the light of the truth which is in it. Your existence is an embodiment of light.

His face is a reflection of the beauty of the beloved which ignites the love for the True Beloved in the hearts.

Your head holds the intelligence of great minds, and your chest enfolds a mad heart [which is mad in Allāh's love].

A goblet by your side and a rosary in your hand. Rarely could anyone have seen an ascetic like this.

Your tongue is occupied in Allāh's remembrance, and your heart is also happy in His remembrance.

What an excellent time and what a lovely occasion when the goblet is on the lips and the beloved is at one's side!

The intoxication of this drink is most unique in the sense that you are a youth in your exact time of old age.

He has an exceptional expertise in winning over the heart. You are a very old and experienced heart-ravisher.

O Khwājah! Look at the rank of our Ashraf. Come to the Khānqāh of our Ashraf.

If you want to see him, you will have to come here. You will see poverty in royal garments.

This is a strange work of the Real Doer: the proud and the humble are gathered in the same place.

Sometimes you are sitting on a high pedestal, and sometimes [you are so low] that we cannot even see your heels.

In addition to possessing a regal appearance, you command a hundred times more awes than the kings.

You neither have a kingdom, throne nor crown. But you have a royal temperament.

Every person of the heart, prattler and audacious one is lost in your presence – like a cat which disappears in the presence of a lion.

No one has the courage to say anything in your presence. It is as though they have lost their tongues.

There is no need for anyone to express his conditions before you because all knots are untied [all problems solved] without having to say anything.

There is no room for speaking and conversations here. This assembly is solely an assembly of viewing your illuminated face.

Listen attentively to what I am saying: Do not utter a word here. When you are in his presence, you must lock your tongue.

When you are in his presence, make a path to his heart with your heart and join your heart to his.

The heart which attaches itself to his heart becomes a garden even if it was a thorn.

Lose yourself in his heart, and you will observe majestic things there.

His body is with everyone else on earth, but his heart is present in Allāh's court – in His Throne.

This Khānqāh is a place of amazing joy. This Khānqāh is a place of unique purity.

If Paradise is to be found on earth, it is here, it is here, it is here.

The cup bearer is one, and the drinkers are in the thousands. All are busy looking at his two intoxicated eyes.

The tavern is in a flourishing state. Every drinker is in ecstasy and intoxication.

O Allāh! How excellent these drinkers of love are! How lovely this drunkenness and greatness of Allāh!

Do not ask about those who are engaged in Allāh's remembrance in the middle of the night. They are occupied with their hearts and tongues.

What are you asking about the joy of remembrance at predawn!? It is better than morsels of chicken and fish.

Every room is reverberating with dhikr even though it may be very small and constricted. The dhikr is so much better than the sound of drums and fiddles.

Over here, the heart repeats Allāh's name because it hears His name repeated all the time.

Look at how healthy the air is over here. The heart is cured without any medication.

O you who are searching for Allāh! Where are you? O you who want to be cured! Where are you?

O you seekers! Come, come! O you whose hearts are burnt! Come here!

By Allāh's grace, what a high court this is! Every pauper is a king in this place.

No one brings gold and silver here. In fact, no one has contact with anyone.

That place is a Paradise where there is no discomfort. No person has anything to do with another.

Come! Cast aside your pride and evil. What can I tell you about the majesties which ought to be observed here!

My tongue cannot express your blessings because the ship is in a shore-less ocean.

What I do know is that what you heard must be seen with your eyes. Hearsay can never equal an eye-witness account.

I am not saying anything but the truth because this is a matter which concerns Dīn. Believe what I am saying because my eyes have seen all this.

Majdhūb is not conveying something which he heard. When a Qalandar says something, he says it after having seen it.

Hadrat Ashraf ʿAlī is from among the special servants of Allāh. He is a walī. He is a walī. He is a walī.

His words, actions and spiritual conditions are witnesses to his beauty and perfection.

It is fruitless to have any doubts because the people of the hearts are not affected by those who have evil thoughts about them.

You are an imām for every intelligent and religious person. It is most incorrect to be opposed to you.

> Every objector believes in his heart that you are right. He may speak out against you verbally, but his heart attests to your genuineness.
>
> What benefit is there in enemies hating him? It is to their loss. It is to their loss. It is to their loss.
>
> We should not try to fight lions because it is synonymous to breaking our own hands.
>
> The one who fights a walī of Allāh has in fact stood up to wage war against Allāh.
>
> He has no fear whatsoever for enemies because they are despicable. Of what value are the tiny particles of dust before the sun?
>
> The comprehensiveness of your light is absolutely clear. But it is concealed to those who are blind of sight.
>
> Your internal pain has come out in such a way that your breaths have ignited fires in the entire world.
>
> Because of you, there are sparks of light in thousands of others. Countless candles are lit by a single lamp.
>
> May your heart remain forever alive with love. May its blessings remain forever in the world.
>
> Even if I may be mad in my love for him, so what! The entire world loves him.

Two Words Of Advice From His Shaykh At The Time Of Departure

I now return to the original subject. When Hadrat Wālā completed his spiritual training and was about to leave the service of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, the latter gave him two specific words of advice. (1) “Look here, Miyā Ashraf ʿAlī! On reaching India, you will be faced with a particular condition. You must not be hasty.” (2) “If you become fed up with Kānpūr for whatever reason, do not attach yourself to any other place. You must proceed to Thānah Bhawan.” In his letter dated Muharram 1308 A.H. he had stopped Hadrat Wālā from leaving Kānpūr because that was a period of training. But now that he acquired firmness, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib is himself giving him an indication of leaving Kānpūr.

Hadrat Wālā Returns To India

After being dyed in the Chishtī Sābrī Imdādī dye – which was the dye of Allāh *taʿālā* and His proof at the time – taking on its colours in totality and perfection, traversing all the stations and levels of this unique path, and imbibing all spiritual qualities and perfections, Hadrat Wālā returned to India. He returned as the Hakīm al-Ummat (specialist physician of the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) and became engrossed in curing the community of its spiritual maladies and enriching it with spiritual treasures.

The Light Of Cognition Rises In India

Just recently, Hājī Muhammad Bashīr Sāhib Lucknowī related something in an assembly of Hadrat Wālā. Janāb Bakhshī Nadhīr Hasan Sāhib Marhūm Kānpūrī who was a righteous and religious man, related a dream to him. He had seen this dream during that period of time when Hadrat Wālā had completed his six-month stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah in the service of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and was returning to India. News of his departure had reached Kānpūr. Hājī Muhammad Bashīr Sāhib said: "I remember the gist of the dream to this day. Bakhshī Sāhib saw Hadrat Wālā leaving Makkah Muʿazzamah and arriving in India. The moment he disembarked from the ship, a light spread throughout India, and the darkness which was experienced in the dream was dispersed at once."

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the interpretation of this good dream is more obvious than the light of day. Let alone any room for rejection, there can be no room for any hesitation in this regard. But he must have been astounded at the time when he saw the dream. Hadrat Wālā was already accepted as a disperser of darkness and spreader of Islamic sciences for Kānpūr itself. But who could have ever imagined such all-embracing and universal blessings!?

Return To Kānpūr

After imbibing the blessings and teachings of his shaykh in totality and to perfection, Hadrat Wālā returned to Kānpūr as a fountain of blessings and a source of good. He then immersed himself in conveying internal and external blessings to the people. The people of Kānpūr who where his loyalists were busy making elaborate arrangements for his welcome after

such a long period of separation. Hadrat Wālā already had a strong feeling that this is what they would do. But because he had completely obliterated his self and was embellished with absolute servitude after having spent time in the service of his shaykh, he went to great pains in concealing his arrival to the extent that not a single person could reach the station to receive him. Hadrat Wālā suddenly appeared in the Madrasah without anyone having prior knowledge of it. Those who had been waiting anxiously for him were both astounded and remorseful because no one had even heard of his arrival, and all the preparations and arrangements for welcoming him had to be cast aside.

Crowds Of Friends Come To Visit Him

No sooner Hadrat Wālā reached the Madrasah, news of his arrival spread like wild fire throughout the city. People who were eager to meet him began arriving in groups after groups. This resulted in a constant coming and going of guests which did not seem as if it would end. When the people informed Hadrat Wālā of their preparations for welcoming him, he said: "This is why I came away without informing you'll before hand."

The people thought that since Hadrat Wālā's family was with, he must have been inconvenienced at the station. But he related to them that he experienced no inconvenience whatsoever. "Allāh *taʿālā* had been most kind to us. We found a small conveyance on the platform itself. I seated the family on it, loaded the goods onto a porter and came out of the station. I then took a conveyance and came here to the Madrasah. I was not troubled in any way, and many Muslims were saved from inconvenience. After all, formalities always cause inconveniences and difficulties. Formalities can never compare with the ease which simplicity provides."

Hadrat Wālā Returns A Changed Person

On returning from Makkah Muʿazzamah, Hadrat Wālā occupied himself once again in teaching, lecturing and propagating. In addition to this, he also initiated a programme of spiritual instruction and training. Those who observed him now were astounded to see the changes in him. He was completely different from before.

I clearly recall a very old statement of my deceased father. He used to say: "I witnessed that era in Maulānā's [Hadrat Wālā's] life when he was very red and fair, always cheerful, handsome, with glittering parted hair, and well-dressed. He looked like a perpetual groom in the prime of his youth. Then I observed the time when he returned after having spent time with Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. His face had turned yellow, withered, gloomy and dishevelled. He neither bothered about applying oil to his hair nor did he worry about combing it. He did not wear a long coat, and no clothing with laces and embroidery. He would only wear a plain kurtah and a pants. Hadrat Wālā relates: "My senior wife was very particular about making me wear formal clothes because she had a lot of interest in embroidery in those days."

In short, Hadrat Wālā's internal lushness and opulence had caused him to disregard his external appearance totally. However, a thousand external appearances could be sacrificed for that pauper-like state. In fact, he had more attraction than before.

Changes In The Madrasah, Teachers And Students

Some time after returning from the service of his shaykh, Hadrat Wālā once again experienced intense yearning for Allāh *taʿālā* and his previous spiritual condition returned to him. But its nature had changed. The yearning which he had experienced previously was mixed with restlessness while the present one was mixed with enthusiasm. There was worry and concern in the previous condition, but now there was joy. There was discomfort previously, now there was enjoyment. Previously it had a tinge of dissatisfaction, now it was pleasing. Previously he was moving towards Allāh *taʿālā*, now he was immersed in Allāh *taʿālā*. Previously it entailed striving and exertion, while now the objective of circuiting the Kaʿbah was achieved. The previous spiritual condition stemmed from the absence of having connected with Allāh *taʿālā*. Now it stemmed from having connected with Him. That was a time of questing, now was the time of having reached. That was a time of separation, this was a time of getting together. That was a time of regret, this was a time of yearning. That was a state preceding witnessing, this was a time subsequent to it. That was the effect of love, this was the effect of beauty. The following lines of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* apply here:

> A nightingale picked up a beautiful petal in its beak and was crying out in its beautiful voice while the petal was in its beak. I asked: "What is the reason for crying out when you have obtained your objective?" It replied: "The display of the beloved has caused me to devote myself to this task."

In short, the present restlessness when compared to the previous one was one of extreme joy because it stemmed from intense affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*. It was as though it was made up of yearning and affinity together. Instead of the effects of restlessness being manifest, the effects of yearning were prominent. Consequently, the very nature of the Madrasah changed. The normal text books were being taught, but when any lesson had the slightest resemblance to Sufism, lengthy and detailed discussions on Sufism followed, and the students were overcome by spiritual ecstasy. Many of the teachers and students began dhikr and other spiritual exercises, and began experiencing unique conditions and amazing states.

Due to his enthusiasm in the beginning, Hadrat Wālā initiated a circle of attention (where people sit in a circle and contemplate and reflect). The Madrasah was now transformed into a khānqāh. Hadrat Wālā describes the level and extent of zeal and fervour of those days: "It was my heartfelt desire to make all the people of the world into those who are immersed in Allāh's remembrance, and to turn all of them into His true friends."

Enthusiasm And Zeal Of The Early Days

I met some of those who had witnessed the nature of the Madrasah of those days and also those who had attended the circle of attention. For example, Janāb Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was a very powerful and distinguished khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā. On several occasions I saw him overcome by an intense spiritual condition by merely speaking about something or when a certain poem was quoted before him. His hands and feet used to become cold, he would scream out uncontrollably, and tremble like a slaughtered animal. On one occasion, I requested him to accompany me to Mansūrī[1] together with a few other friends. This journey entailed a lot of

[1] The name of a mountainous hill-station in India.

climbing, and because he was very thin and fretful by nature, he was extremely fatigued. When he was in the midst of his tiredness at a very steep point, exceptionally distressed and complaining to me, I quoted the following couplet to him:

> This complaint of disloyalty and cry of perversity is the punishment for attaching your heart. It is the joy of friendship.

The moment he heard this, he forgot all about his tiredness and fatigue. He went into a fervour, screamed and began dancing in ecstasy.

He used to be overcome by fear [of Allāh] most of the time. In most cases, when stories and incidents about forgiveness were discussed, he would go into a state of spiritual ecstasy. On several occasions he was noticed going to Hadrat Wālā without bothering whether it was the appropriate time or not, and speaking to him about matters relating to being overcome by ecstasy. Hadrat Wālā says: "I have not come across anyone else who was so overcome by fear." When he used to speak while overcome by ecstasy, it seemed as if his heart was being torn apart at that very moment.

My teacher, Janāb Maulānā Sirāj Ahmad Sāhib Amrauhī, who is also a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā related to me that on one occasion when Hadrat Wālā was not present [in Thānah Bhawan], Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib was overcome by an intense spiritual condition while in salāh. In his salāh he was involuntarily saying "Allāh Allāh", sometimes taking a few steps in front of the row and sometimes behind. The same condition persisted when Hadrat Wālā returned from his journey. Hadrat Wālā read something on some water and gave it to him to drink. Only then did he settle down. Hadrat Wālā warned another person who was very desirous of experiencing spiritual conditions by asking him: "What, do you also want to have experiences like him?" He replied: "No Hadrat, this is a very difficult condition, I cannot handle it."

Despite these spiritual conditions which are experienced by him to this day, Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib clearly recalls and recounts Hadrat Wālā's days of fervour and zeal in Kānpūr; and still desires to see them today. Hadrat Wālā consoles him by saying: "Those previous conditions were from the self. The

present conditions are from the soul. The former cannot compare with the latter.”

An Example Of The Attention Of The Early Days

The effects of the attention of the early days were like a heavy downpour which caused a flood of water to just flow away – it left behind no clouds, no water, and the ground remained as dry as it had been. As for his present day spiritual conditions, they are like a continuous fine rain. Although the latter seems to be nothing compared to the heavy downpour, it is completely absorbed by the ground. It does not just flow away like the heavy downpour which has no effect on the ground. A piece of ground becomes suitable for agriculture after it receives a fine continuous rain.

After hearing about Hadrat Wālā’s early days of zeal and fervour from Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib, I asked Hadrat Wālā: “Hadrat, do you think of those conditions of the early days?” He replied: “If a husband were to remove the glittering silver jewellery from his wife and adorn her with pure gold jewellery from head to toe, would she ever think about the silver jewellery? Or will she, instead, thank her husband for removing the cheap silver jewellery and adorning her with expensive gold jewellery?”

A Strange Condition Experienced By A Student

In short, the period after spending time with Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was one of intense zeal and fervour, resulting in students and teachers becoming engrossed in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*. A student began emulating Hadrat Wālā and immersed himself in dhikr without consulting him. One day, while studying *Bustān* under a certain Maulānā, he was overcome by intense ecstasy when he read the following lines:

> Someone said to Majnūn: “O you of good habits! What has happened to you that you never came back to drink with us? You probably do not love Laylā anymore. Your attention is diverted to someone else and you are not inclined to her any longer.”
>
> When the poor fellow heard this, he began crying loudly and profusely, and said: “O sir! Remove my hand from my side. My heart is already in pain, do

> not make it worse by rubbing salt into the wound. Separation is not a proof of patience. Separation is very often necessary."

He experienced such an intense condition that he rushed out while saying *Lā ilāha illallāh* and ran towards the market place. Anyone whom he met along the way, he would instruct him to say *Lā ilāha illallāh*. His effect was so strong that the person would be forced to say *Lā ilāha illallāh*. He said this to many Hindus and even Hindu constables, and they too said it. The boy's uncle who was also studying there was quite distressed. Hadrat Wālā said: "There is no reason to be distressed, you ought to be happy that your nephew has become a walī." When his nephew was trembling and palpitating, he tried to subdue him by pressing him down. Hadrat Wālā stopped him saying: "Do not do that. Let him continue. If you press him down you might throttle him and kill him." He added: "The pain is already in his heart. Now do not allow him to injure himself physically. Do not allow him to fall, but at the same time, do not hold him."

When he ran towards the market place, his uncle and others also ran behind him. They caught him after much difficulty and brought him back. The time for 'asr salāh was coming to an end by the time they returned to the Madrasah. Hadrat Wālā said: "Although he is not accountable at present, it will be better if he is made to perform the salāh." He was told to perform his salāh but he merely continued repeating the words *Lā ilāha illallāh*.

One of the etiquette of ecstasy is that those who are present near the person who is experiencing it must also be in line with him and agree with him. One of Hadrat Wālā's students, Maulwī Muhammad Yūnus Sāhib, therefore resorted to this plan: He said to him: "Perform the wudū' of *Lā ilāha illallāh*." He carried out the instruction immediately and performed wudū'. He said to him: "Perform the salāh of *Lā ilāha illallāh*." He stood up to perform the salāh but performed it in a strange way. Instead of saying *Allāhu Akbar*, he said: "Āh, āh." Instead of reciting the Qur'ān, he began reading love poems. He quoted many poems although he was never heard quoting poems previously. He also performed many extra prostrations in this salāh.

The Student Is Treated

The above condition remained throughout the night and a need was now felt to remove him from that condition. The next day, Hadrat Wālā sent him to a dervish by the name of Miyā Khākī Shāh who lived in Kānpūr and whose experience in removing such conditions was known to Hadrat Wālā. Miyā Khākī Shāh said jokingly: "You were the one who shot the bullet and now you are sending him to me to remove it!?" He then focussed his attention on the student for some time and asked him to return the next day. But the student dreamt of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* that night who said to him: "You must say to the fakir: 'How can you be so wretched so as to try to remove this bounty?" When this dream was related to Hadrat Wālā, he did not allow the student to go to the dervish.

Another idea which came to mind was that the student's zeal and fervour would be calmed through samāʿ. Hadrat Wālā spoke to a Sufi who practised samāʿ and said to him: "Although it is against my approach, take him to your place and let him listen to some samāʿ." Hadrat Wālā did not know that this Sufi also used musical instruments. He acceded to this request very happily because he now had the opportunity of boasting that the Maulānās also need him. The Sufi took the student to his group, but when they sat down with the musical instruments, the student became very angry and said: "What are all these baseless things? You want to immerse me in sin?! I will break all these instruments." Saying this, he fled from there. Hadrat Wālā then asked a Bengali student who had a good pain-filled voice to take the student to a quiet place and quote poetry to him. Hadrat Wālā did not permit anyone else to go near. He quoted the following panegyric of Hadrat Khusro *rahimahullāh* to him:

> For how long will the heart burn from your separation? For how long will my life be spoilt out of questing for you?
>
> O Khusro! Look at the book of his face. For how long are you going to continue studying panegyrics and books?

The student went into a fit when he heard the above couplets, got up in a frenzy and went on repeating the words "for how long, for how long?" in such a loud voice that even Hadrat Wālā

heard him. Once his heart gave vent to his rage, he settled down quite well. This procedure proved quite beneficial. The student had also dreamt of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* instructing him to pledge bayʿah. When he asked: "To whom should I pledge?" He received the reply: "To the one in whom you have faith and confidence." He said: "I have faith and confidence in you." Saying this, he requested Hadrat Wālā to accept his bayʿah. Hadrat Wālā accepted without hesitation because he considered it to be an instruction from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "People did not understand what these conditions were all about. Whereas the zeal and fervour remained for just four days and then everything returned to normal. He is living to this day but totally blank. It was merely a transitory enjoyment."

The Effects Of Attention

Janāb Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib who was mentioned previously began experiencing many expositions in Hadrat Wālā's circle of attention. Hadrat Wālā felt a desire to focus his attention on his senior wife. This affected her so much that she began having cramps in her hands and feet. Hadrat Wālā himself got frightened and quickly moved his attention away. He read something, blew on water and gave it to her to drink. Only then did she recover.

A Different Type Of Yearning

In short, after Hadrat Wālā's return from Makkah Muʿazzamah, he was on a spiritual high in which he immersed himself in dhikr, spiritual exercises and experienced many spiritual conditions and states. This is also gauged from letter no. 17 of *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah* dated 8 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1313 A.H. in which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib writes: "Peace be to you, my heart is with you. All praise is due to Allāh, I am well and pray to Allāh daily for your wellbeing. I was most pleased to receive your letter…May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you forever overflowing and intoxicated in His remembrance, yearning for Him and various spiritual ecstasies."

But once he got firmness in the acquired stations, the enthusiasm took on a different hue and he now experienced an

intense yearning for the expected stations. The following couplets apply to his situation:

> There is no benefit in quenching my thirst from this water of immortality. May Allāh increase the number of thirsty ones in every era.
>
> Traversing the path of love is a never ending journey because this path goes on increasing on its own. This is similar to a branch which continues growing with thorns.
>
> The ocean of love has no shores. When you are in such an ocean, you have no alternative but to hand over your life.

The trembling and palpitating condition which Hadrat Wālā had been experiencing before his stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah returned once again. But there was a world of difference between the two. The first stemmed from a primary quest, while the latter from a quest for more. Changes of this nature are essential experiences in the path of Sufism. Although river water settles down once it reaches the ocean, it also has to experience the high tide, low tide and thrashing of the waves – all of which are more powerful and more intense than before. To explain it in another way, when a person reaches a high mountain peak, he still has to encounter deep valleys. After entering the borders of royal territory, a person has to pass through lengthy and narrow canals and channels to reach certain special palaces.

Hadrat Wālā Is Overcome By Worry

As per the foretelling of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, Allāh *taʿālā* had willed the elevation in ranks of Hadrat Wālā. Thus, his spiritual condition took another turn and his quest intensified much more than before. As the saying goes, every ending marks a return to the beginning, Hadrat Wālā experienced the same confusion and worry that was experienced before his stay in Makkah Muʿazzamah. In fact, this thirst was far more intense than before because he had already tasted it previously. Although this worry was extremely enjoyable, he perceived an immediate need for someone to steer him. His gaze naturally fell on the same person who had provided him with some sort of relief during the beginning stages of his spiritual journey, viz. his affectionate maternal uncle, Pīrjī Imdād ʿAlī Sāhib.

Hadrat Wālā had been informing him periodically of his spiritual conditions. He also made it a point of reverting to him at this stage. But how could the heart which had now been illuminated by the light of the Sunnah and dyed with the Imdādullāh colour accept any other colour!? How could the noble and fine temperament of the one who was to become the reviver of the Sunnah, obliterator of innovations and the Mujaddid of the Muslim community not reject any such thing which had the slightest tinge of conflict with the Sunnah? Even if the person who was giving it was excused due to his condition? Consequently, Pīrjī Sāhib's intense focus, various plans and his special spiritual engrossment were of no avail. They only served to increase Hadrat Wālā's restlessness and intense thirst.

Lectures Are Suspended

Although Hadrat Wālā did experience some recovery from the above measures, it was not a genuine recovery. As per the words of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib it was merely an "assumed and borrowed recovery". It was not a longstanding recovery. This comes out quite clearly from Letter no. 23 of *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah* and will be quoted later on. According to Hadrat Wālā, the fundamental reason for this restlessness was: "An extreme hastiness in wanting to acquire my objective and an intense desire to experience involuntary spiritual conditions and states." This excessive enthusiasm increased to the extent that the following couplet applied to him:

> So that you may know that when Allāh *taʿālā* draws a person to Himself, he becomes useless to all worldly activities.

His heart shunned all other occupations. His interest in teaching no longer remained, nor did he have any desire for external and internal instruction. Anyway, he had to force himself to pay attention to his teaching because he was an employee and it was therefore obligatory on him to carry out his duties. As for his other activities such as delivering talks, lectures, internal and external instruction, etc. he suspended them completely. After all, he was so worried about his own self, where did he have the time to worry about others? The time that was left over after teaching was spent in meditating about the True Beloved. In short, he suspended all unnecessary relations and turned to solitude. He even gave up

delivering public lectures which the people of Kānpūr thoroughly used to enjoy from the very beginning of his stay in that city.

The People Of Kānpūr Are Worried

No sooner Hadrat Wālā suspended his public lectures, all the Muslims of Kānpūr were panic-stricken. The thirsty ones for the sciences and knowledge of Hadrat Wālā became restless like fish out of water. They began applying various types of pressure on him to deliver lectures. Janāb ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Khān Sāhib, the founder of Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm and an elderly pious man, personally came to Hadrat Wālā and quoted the following couplet out of worry and love:

> The course of beauty has been covered. Now give me zakāh because I am a poor and needy man.

Hadrat Wālā replied in a very painful tone: "Hadrat! I myself am becoming poor, what can I give to others?"

How can a person who considers himself to be so bankrupt and is so overcome by servitude ever be able to deliver a lecture which, in a way, is a sort of high status and a claim?

The Ulamā Request Hadrat Wālā To Deliver A Lecture

The Madrasah was hosting a jalsah during the same period. All the committee members of the Madrasah felt an intense need for Hadrat Wālā to address the audience. Outside ʿulamā' had arrived in order to attend the jalsah. The committee members took them with and proceeded to Hadrat Wālā. They used these ʿulamā' as intermediaries and insisted that he deliver a speech. Hadrat Wālā's sound heart has so much of respect and reverence for ʿulamā' that he shows full consideration to even the young ones among them. But here they brought senior ʿulamā' as intermediaries. Hadrat Wālā was now in a tight spot because he could neither refuse nor agree. When he had no alternative, he lowered his head and began crying. When Maulānā Zuhūr al-Islām Sāhib Fatahpūrī *rahimahullāh* saw the scene before him, his heart melted and he quoted the following couplet spontaneously:

> Love has rendered us totally useless. If it were not for that, we too were people who could do some work.

The Maulānā addressed his companions: “Enough brothers, enough. Do not tell him anything. Leave him to himself, do not impose on him.” Maulānā Shāh Sulaymān Sāhib Phulwārī had also arrived in the city. People went to him and persisted that he influences Hadrat Wālā to deliver a speech. He gave a unique reply: “If you are going to force a person who is in such a state to deliver a speech, then when he sits on the pulpit, the first words which will issue from his mouth will be: ‘I am the truth.’[1] In such a situation, it is totally wrong to insist on him.”

The Reason For Stopping Lectures

Hadrat Wālā relates: “During those days, I was overcome by a severe need for solitude. This is why I gave up delivering lectures. I feared I might make incorrect statements causing misunderstanding to the masses and harm to their Dīn. There was only one person to whom I used to relate in privacy the themes of tauhīd which used to enter my heart. He was Maulānā Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib Bardawānī (who was a wise and sagacious scholar and a most trustworthy student). At the time, he was more of an academic and was not overly influenced by Sufism. Despite this, he was very much affected by what I used to say to him, tears would flow involuntarily from his eyes, and he felt compelled to agree with whatever I said to him.”

Glory to Allāh! Look at Hadrat Wālā’s concern for the wellbeing of the masses even during these spiritual conditions which he was experiencing. In the presence of such conditions, he decided to give up lecturing completely.

The Wisdom Behind Hadrat Wālā’s Worry

There is another important incident related to the above condition. Hadrat Wālā relates it quite often. Since it clarifies and explains the above condition, I consider it appropriate to relate it here. Hadrat Wālā himself explains it in detail towards the end of his lecture titled *Shukr al-Mathnawī*. Pages 22 and 23 of this lecture are quoted verbatim here.

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[1] He is making reference to a statement made by a senior Sufi of the past, and for which he was criticized because only Allāh *taʿālā* is the truth.

There is some wisdom behind Allāh *taʿālā* withholding a certain bounty. When I was overzealous in the beginning, a thought came to my mind that I have a quest and it is an accepted fact that Allāh *taʿālā* is aware of our condition. It is also an accepted fact that He is all-powerful, and most affectionate and all merciful at the same time. Why, then, is there a delay? I could not understand this. When my worry increased considerably, I felt I should consult Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*, so I opened the *Mathnawī* with this in mind. On the very first page which I opened, these four couplets appeared which contained four preludes which I had laid down. There was a fifth one which was not in my mind. In the absence of the fifth one, I could not come to an answer. The fifth one was that Allāh *taʿālā* is all-wise and there is some wisdom in the delay. The couplets are as follows:

> Your pain was searching for a path to Me. Just yesterday I was listening to your cries.
>
> I have the power to show you the path without having to make you wait like this, and to enable you to traverse the path.
>
> So that you could free yourself from the present storms and place your feet on the treasures of reaching Me.
>
> However, the joys and sweetness of one's house [destination] are in accordance with the pains of the journey.
>
> You will only derive benefits from your sons when you bear the hardships and afflictions of the journey.

The essence of the above lines are: I accept that your pain of love is searching for ways to reach Me (my first prelude is accepted here). I was also listening to your painful cries last night (my second prelude is acknowledged here). I have the power to guide you towards reaching Me, and to provide the path to you so that you are saved from the upheavals of time and you reach me safely. (My third prelude is explicitly accepted, and the fourth implicitly). However, this delay has been caused because the rule is that the more the difficulties along the way, the more enjoyable one's house becomes on reaching it. The full enjoyment of meeting your family, children

and close relatives can only be acquired when you have to suffer many difficulties and hardships on your journey. This theme demonstrates a fifth prelude. After accepting all my other preludes, an answer is provided to a doubt about the fifth prelude. The essence of it is: We are all-wise and whatever We do is based on absolute wisdom. The wisdom behind this delay and pause is that once you eventually reach Us, you will appreciate it.

Overwhelming Servitude

During the period when this condition was quite intense, Hadrat Wālā went home on the occasion of ʿīd. As was the practice of the local residents, after the ʿīd salāh they proceeded to the grave of Shāh Wilāyat Sāhib. In the presence of everyone there, a person scolded Hadrat Wālā by saying: "You should not have reverted to your uncle, Pīrjī Imdād ʿAlī Sāhib. You acted against what your academic position requires of you because Pīrjī Sāhib's condition does not conform with the Sharīʿah." Instead of responding to this objection and engaging the person in an argument, Hadrat Wālā fell at his feet in the presence of all and, in order to avoid any argument, acknowledged his mistake and said: "Yes sir. I have indeed committed a grave error. Pardon me for Allāh's sake and do not discuss this issue. Let it pass. I myself accept that I am far worse than what you think of me." This incident clearly indicates Hadrat Wālā's overwhelming humility, and a dislike and aversion for arguments.

The Effects Of Zealousness

Hadrat Wālā had a house built in Thānah Bhawan during this same period. Since he was in a serious state of abstention, he named the building "Khānah Āzād". But Pīrjī Sāhib stopped him from giving it this name because it gives off a sense of aggrandizement and advertising.

All the above incidents bring us to the simple conclusion that Hadrat Wālā was experiencing a very forceful and strong spiritual condition at the time. At this point, I recall a very emotional poem which Hadrat Wālā had composed during the same period. I am quoting it here because it is a reflection of his internal condition and yearning quest.

> The thing which is acquired in this path is astonishing. It is astonishing. It is astonishing.

The love poems of that period were by and large expressions of a trembling and restlessness. Especially the following couplets which are most applicable and depict the spiritual condition in the best manner. Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* says:

> O you whose pain is the treatment for my illness of failure. And whose remembrance in one solitary corner is my companion.

Hadrat Amīr Khusro *rahimahullāh* said:

> I am confounded in your hopes. O you towards whom all the eyes of the world are directed.
>
> We alone are confounded and silent, while the entire world is speaking about you.
>
> Khusro is the prisoner of your net. Where else can this poor fellow go to if he were to leave your alley?

As I had explained in detail, the trembling which Hadrat Wālā was experiencing was a very enjoyable one because the reason for it, as in his own words, was: "A hurry in the quest together with hope, and yearning for Allāh accompanied with hope in success." There was worry, but no fear. It was a beloved worry because it stemmed from yearning and enthusiasm. The enjoyment in it was, as in Hadrat Wālā's words: "My heart desired that everyone should have the same condition." This proves his affection towards the creation and ardent desire to proliferate the path (all of which are essentials of being a shaykh). As for those who are deficient in spiritual wealth, where will they ever tolerate others to join them!?

A Letter To Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

When Hadrat Wālā's enthusiastic condition increased beyond the limits, and the directives of his uncle, Pīrjī Imdād 'Alī Sāhib, only served to worsen his restlessness, he became very worried and concerned. He wrote a letter to his original mentor, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, in which he also clearly mentioned how he reverted to his uncle. Hadrat Wālā had reverted to him with noble intentions and a genuine quest. In fact, he had, in his simplicity, even requested Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's permission to frequent his uncle. The vast distance between himself and

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib resulted in the correspondence to each other to be a long drawn out affair, while Hadrat Wālā's condition needed a quick response. His continual spiritual changes demanded he send a quick letter to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib in which he describes his condition and he acquires his objective as quickly as possible.

Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā had heard this principled statement of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib: "Everyone listen attentively. I do not want to make anyone my slave, I want to make them the slaves of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Allāh is the objective, not the shaykh. I presented to you whatever I have. If you desire more, you have my open permission to go and acquire it from wherever you wish. If you feel the need to pledge bay'ah to someone else, you have my permission for that as well."

Hadrat Wālā relates: "I experienced an intense thirst and quest during those days. Although I had already decided that I will revert to my own elders in India – especially Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* – I felt that if any person has any additional spiritual treasure, I will acquire it from him as well. As for our own elders, they are on our own creed, and I will eventually have to revert to them under all conditions. But if I were to revert to our own elders first, it would be most disrespectful to revert to others later on."

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Reply

Look at the kind and affectionate manner in which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib responded after receiving Hadrat Wālā's letter in which he described his spiritual conditions. The person who brought the reply to Hadrat Wālā related to him: "When Hadrat Hājī Sāhib received and read your letter, he became quite distressed. He would go into his house, come out after some time, go in again and come out again. He said this several times: 'He is still a young man. He must have been overcome and could not bear it. But I am so far away, what can I do?'"

The person who brought the letter said: "Hadrat, I am leaving very soon [for India]." Hadrat Hājī Sāhib got very happy when he heard this. He dictated a reply and gave it to the person. He also asked him to convey this message verbally: "When this servant [referring to himself] is alive, why are you reverting to someone else?" When Hadrat Wālā heard of the person's arrival in Kānpūr, he hastened enthusiastically to him.

The person handed over Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's letter and also conveyed the verbal message. The following couplets apply to his situation:

> All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* my restless soul has found comfort when I suddenly received a letter from the city of my beloved.
>
> I placed my eyes of gratitude at the feet of the messenger [who brought the letter] because it brought delight to my expectant eyes.

The Reply Removes His Distress

Hadrat Wālā relates: "The man conveyed Hadrat's message to me before zuhr. The moment I heard it, it seemed as if someone placed a block of ice over my burning chest. More than half of my worries ended by the time of ʿasr, and everything was clear by maghrib time – there was no sign of any worry and distress."

I wrote a letter to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib the next morning and wrote the following applicable couplets of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* at the top of the letter:

> Yesterday morning he gave me salvation from my anger and gave me the fountain of life in the darkness of the very next night.
>
> The slavery of the tavern-keeper is a unique elixir. I became its dust and he conferred such high ranks to me.
>
> The hand of one's shaykh is not far from those who are not in his presence. His hand is most certainly in the control of none other than Allāh.

A Dream

During this period, Hadrat Wālā dreamt of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib in which the latter said to him with reference to Pīrjī: "Do not remain in his company, you will develop an itch." This was also a type of supervision from the unseen.

At the time of sending the verbal message, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had written a letter in which he replied to Hadrat Wālā's spiritual conditions and gave it to a person to give it personally by hand to Hadrat Wālā. Some portions of it are quoted here. This is the 23rd letter from *Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah*.

> May Allāh *taʿālā* grant you additional yearning and longing with the composure and clarity of the mind. Your letter has reached and I got to know you spiritual conditions. You mention that with the advice of Pīr Jī Sāhib you find some improvement. This improvement is only imaginary and temporary. You had also requested permission to visit Pīr Jī. This insignificant servant grants you permission to go to him. However, the devotional spiritual practices suggested by him will be harmful because the consequence of every spiritual exercise is difference. As the proverb goes: "Every flower has a different fragrance and colour."
>
> You mentioned the reasons for the mind being scattered and divided. The treatment for this is in the book *Diyā' al-Qulūb*, pages 54 and 55. You may apply this treatment. Allāh willing, you will find improvement and good. And, Allāh willing, you will find your thoughts to be collected and composed again. Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Razzāq Sāhib also explained to me your conditions. That is all. Most probably dated 1313 A.H.

This letter which was a comforter of the hearts was filled with many rare facts of Sufism and most beneficial prescriptions for the removal of worries and doubts. But more than that, it was the result of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's prayers and focus which emanated from the depths of his heart. Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "I did not even experience any need to follow the prescriptions which were mentioned in the letter. The moment I heard the verbal message and read his letter, I was consoled and (as mentioned above) everything was clear by maghrib time – there was no sign of any worry and distress. I experienced absolute peace."

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had written the following glad tiding: "Allāh willing, your temperament will experience rectitude and success, and your thoughts will become focussed." Allāh *taʿālā* fulfilled it so swiftly that years of worry came to an end within a few hours. Divine assistance removed Hadrat Wālā from the web of confusion and perplexity and conveyed him all at once to the shore of peace and tranquillity.

Severing Ties From Pīrjī Imdād Sāhib

Hadrat Wālā wrote a very emotional letter in Arabic to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* about how he reverted to his uncle. The portion in which he describes his restlessness was quoted previously at its appropriate place. We now quote that section in which he describes how his restlessness and worry were replaced by peace and calm. He writes:

ثم لما ساعدني الجد بلثم تراب نعليه وحضرت لديه، جددت الإرادة ليكون لما عسى أن يكون فات أعاده، فلما رجعت ازددت ظلماء، وأكاد أحسب السراب ماء، ورأيتني لا ازداد حيرة ووحشة، وضيقا ودهشة، كتبت إلى حبيب ما وقع من الحال، وناديت بالبلبال:

يا مرشدي يا موئلي يا مفزعي – يا ملجائي في مبدئي ومعادي

إرحم علي يا غياث فليس لي – كهفي سوى حبيبكم من زاد

فاز الأنام بكم وإن هائم – فانظر إلي برحمة يا هاد

يا سيدي لله شيئا انه – أنتم لي المجدي وانى جدي

فعذرني ونصرني وقال حبا وكرامة

وأقامني على ساحل السلامة

فترنمت شوقا تمغيت ذوقا

A poet says:

> Yesterday morning he gave me salvation from my anger, and gave me the fountain of life in the darkness of the very next night.
>
> The slavery of the tavern-keeper is a unique elixir. I became its dust and he conferred such high ranks to me.

قد لسعت حية الهوى كبدي – فلا طبيب لها ولا راقي

إلا الحبيب الذي شغفت به – فعنده رقيتي وترياقي

> The serpent of love bit my heart. There is no physician to treat it nor any soothsayer.
>
> Listen! The beloved by whom I am enamoured is the one who has the amulet and the treatment for me.

In short, by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and through the blessings of the prayers and attention of his shaykh, Hadrat Wālā crossed this valley and, as per the instruction of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, distanced himself from his uncle. Although informing his uncle weighed heavily on Hadrat Wālā and he felt it disrespectful based on the absolute respect and noble thoughts which he had for him, he suppressed and overpowered his feelings in favour of the Sharīʿah. He wrote a very respectful and courteous letter to Pīrjī Sāhib in which he excused himself from any further spiritual consultation in accordance with the teachings of the Sharīʿah. Moreover, although he was closely related to him, Hadrat Wālā suspended visiting him because Hadrat Wālā was now looked up to by the masses and wanted to safeguard them from getting caught up with his uncle.

Respect For The Uncle Is Still Maintained

Although Hadrat Wālā severed his spiritual link with his uncle, Janāb Pīrjī Sāhib, he always maintained his respect for him and continues taking joy in relating incidents from his life and quoting his words of wisdom. Pīrjī Sāhib also maintained noble thoughts and love for Hadrat Wālā. A person went to Pīrjī Sāhib and criticized Hadrat Wālā's severing of ties with him. Pīrjī Sāhib stopped him immediately and said: "That is another matter. He is my son. My attitude towards him is similar to when he was an infant: he must have urinated on me and I must have hit him on one or two occasions. It is the same relationship at present. No one else has a right to say anything in this regard." Hadrat Wālā relates: "One of my uncle's murīds showed me a letter in which he had written: 'Based on differences in our creed, it is not appropriate for you to sit in his [Hadrat Wālā's] company, but you must never be disrespectful to him. He is fulfilling the demands of his position which are obligatory on him in the light of the Sharīʿah.'"

A Reply To Pīrjī's Offer

In addition to this bond and love in absentia, Pīrjī wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā after the latter had severed his link with him in which he said: "I received something from Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* as a trust from his chest to mine. You were a young and righteous man and eligible to receive it. I wanted to give this trust to you but you did not want to take it. If you want, I am still prepared to give it to you now."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "If what you want to give me is compliant with the Sharī'ah, I am prepared to accept it. But if it is in the slightest bit against the Sharī'ah, I ask you to excuse me from accepting it."

The Issue Of Maulūd

In short, Hadrat Wālā separated himself from Janāb Pīrjī Sāhib as a duty of the Sharī'ah, but he did it in a very respectful, dignified and beautiful manner. Even Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* with whom Hadrat Wālā was corresponding on this issue was most pleased in the manner in which he separated himself and approved of it. The gist of this correspondence was mentioned previously, but it is only part of the correspondence. The other part of it is with regard to the issue of maulūd. The gist of it is quoted from Hadrat Wālā's booklet, *Yād Yārā* which is a biography on Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu*.

> Although I had correct beliefs with regard to the disputed issues between those who are on the truth and those who are engrossed in innovations, I had been committing one particular mistake. Many thoughts and actions stemmed from this mistake. I am referring to those customary actions such as mīlād which the erudite scholars totally prohibit the masses from participating in because of some of the harms which such assemblies have. They also prohibit scholars – to a certain extent – from participating in these celebrations. I always considered those evils to be abhorrent and the one who commits them to be worthy of criticism. This was based on the correctness of my beliefs. I used to constantly apprise and inform the masses about these evils. However, I was convinced that the reason for the prohibition was the evils, and where the reason is not found, the prohibition will not apply. Therefore, since the 'ulamā' are free from these evils, there is no need to prohibit them from participating. Similarly, there is no need to prohibit the masses unilaterally. Rather, they should be given permission for the acts themselves, while the evils which they were committing in the process should be rectified. In fact, I considered this

permission to be desirable because it would correct their beliefs as well – the same incorrect beliefs which were the reasons for the prohibition. If we were to prohibit them unilaterally, the masses would consider us to be their antagonists and their beliefs will not get rectified.

I spent a considerable time in this condition and although I was occupied in teaching Hadīth, jurisprudence and other lessons, my mind never thought to the contrary. How can I ever thank Hadrat *quddisa sirruhu*? In his absolute compassion and affection, he conveyed his disappointment with me via Maulwī Munawwar ʿAlī Sāhib Darbhangūmī Marhūm. One of my mistakes in this regard was when some practices of a Sufi did not coincide with the Sharīʿah, I practised on the saying: "Accept what is good and reject what is bad." I followed some of the spiritual practices which he taught me, and also had the occasion of visiting him and staying in his company for some time. As for the evils and harms, I had the same notion as previously, viz. the beliefs of the ʿulamā' are correct and there is no real harm in this case. And it is sufficient to continue informing the masses about what is right and what is wrong. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* also expressed his particular disappointment in this regard. The level of his affection can be gauged from the fact that he never reprimanded me directly. This was in line with the Hadīth's description of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, viz. his level of affection and modesty did not permit him to reprimand anyone directly.

Similarly, although I visited Hadrat on numerous occasions, he never reprimanded me directly. In fact, he went one step further, viz. when anyone laid objections to my actions, Hadrat rationalized them and portrayed them in a good light. Another mistake which I committed is that Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had provided me with general details on the subject of the prohibition of getting involved in contentious issues, and asked me to expound on this subject. Since my mind was still bent on my opinions on this subject, I expounded on it in the

same light, wrote it down, and read it to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to remain in solitude and intermingled very little with the masses. He always had noble thoughts about the masses and was not fully aware of their ignorance and deviation. Consequently, he approved of my explanation and made a few changes here and there. Although I had written the subject matter, since Hadrat had personally instructed me to write it, he got it written from his side, embellished it with his stamp and signature, and permitted me to publish it on his behalf. It was published under the title *Fayslah Haft Mas'alah*. Some people of little intelligence considered this to be in support of their innovations. But how could they think this when it contained a clear refutation of those evils and harms? It is only people with correct beliefs and rational thinking who were given a concession. And this too was based on my thinking that why should the evils of the masses have an effect on the 'ulamā'? Hadrat *quddisa sirruhu* conveyed all this via Maulwī Munawwar 'Alī Sāhib. When he conveyed it to me, I immediately realized my error by virtue of Hadrat's powerful impact. But I felt the need to correspond with him for further clarification. Subsequently, several letters were written from both sides. These were published in my biography.

In short, through Allāh's grace, I was eventually apprised of my error through insight and thorough investigation. On being apprised of it, a huge door of knowledge which had been shut to me for a long time was now opened to me. The essence of it was: Corruption of beliefs is certainly the basis for prohibition. However, corruption of beliefs is all-encompassing irrespective of whether the doer commits it directly or he is the cause of it. Thus, if the doer is an ignoramus, his beliefs will certainly be corrupt. If he is from among the 'ulamā', then although he possesses correct beliefs, he will be the cause of corrupting the beliefs of the masses. And we are prohibited from becoming the causes of

corruption. Although it is possible to apprise the masses of the evils and harms by explaining to them, all the masses cannot be rectified through it, nor will the explanation reach all of them. Thus, if an ordinary person heard of a certain scholar committing the act but was not aware of how he [the scholar] rectified the beliefs, he will become the cause of this ordinary person's deviation. Obviously, if a person becomes the cause of deviation of just one person, it is a major evil. Even if there are a few benefits in the evil, the principle is that if an act contains both good and bad consequences and the act is not an essential objective in the Sharīʿah, the act will be discarded. Based on this principle, we will not pay any attention to acquiring those [few] benefits. Instead, we will discard the act to abstain from its evils. However, if an act is essential and some evils are experienced, we will not give up the act but makes efforts to rectify the harms.

All these injunctions and principles are clearly stated in the Aḫādīth and juridical literature – they are not unknown to experts in the field. I have written in this regard in my book, *Iṣlāḫ ar-Rusūm* (*Rectification of Customs*). Once my thoughts and opinions on the subject were rectified, all other related matters were rectified by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. Consequently, I also gained salvation from the companionship and instructions of dervishes who did not comply with the Sharīʿah. I wrote an addendum to *Fayṣlah Haft Mas'alah* and had it printed. All the misgivings and criticisms were removed in this way.

Progress In Spiritual Conditions

From Ḫaḏrat Wālā's various spiritual changes which were described previously, the reader must have gauged that each change was superior to the previous one. We demonstrated this as we moved along. I recall a statement of Ḫaḏrat Wālā at this point. He said: "Each condition is higher than the previous one. For example, if retraction is experienced after expansion, the retraction is higher than the expansion. If the retraction is followed by expansion once again, the expansion is better than

the retraction and also superior to the previous expansion, and so on."

These different ranks continued in Hadrat Wālā's various spiritual conditions. The condition which he experienced before he could go and stay in the blessed company of his shaykh is known as yearning in the definition of the Sufis. On reaching his shaykh, the yearning was changed to affinity which was higher than the yearning. When he returned to Kānpūr, he experienced yearning once again. This yearning was superior to the affinity and the first yearning. Thereafter, through the blessings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's attention and focus, the yearning was changed to affinity. This was explained in detail previously.

Affinity With Allāh

Affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* surpassed all previous conditions and its essential consequence was that he experienced total affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* and aversion for everything apart from Him. This resulted in a condition which is described by Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* as follows:

> So that you may realize that when Allāh *taʿālā* embraces a person, he becomes free from all the occupations of this world.

Consequently, Hadrat Wālā gradually began experiencing a dislike for all relationships. Although he did experience it before going to Makkah Muʿazzamah, it was during his formative years and the condition also stemmed from immaturity and was not firmly entrenched. This is why Hadrat Hājī Sāhib did not permit him to sever his relations even when he sought his permission. As for the estrangement which he experienced now, it stemmed from steadfastness. It was therefore firmly established and timely. It could not disappear just like that. The experiencing of this estrangement marked the realization of that time which Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had referred to when he had said: "When you become tired of Kānpūr, you must proceed to Thānah Bhawan and settle down there."

Prelude To Separation From Kānpūr

Affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* and estrangement from the creation increased day by day. This eventually caused him to become

estranged from even a beloved place like Kānpūr and an enjoyable occupation such as teaching. The time had now come for Hadrat Wālā to be at the peak from every angle, and devote himself solely to spiritual services.

There was a strong unseen zeal which caused Hadrat Wālā to become tired of Kānpūr. This despite the fact that he loved the place so much. When Hadrat Wālā was leaving Makkah and bidding farewell to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, the latter had advised him that if he becomes tired of Kānpūr, he must not go to any other place. He must place his trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and proceed straight to Thānah Bhawan. Hadrat Wālā was quite surprised at the time and wondered why Hadrat was saying this to him and why should he become tired there!? After all, the people of Kānpūr loved him so much and their treatment of him had got him so used to the place that he had planned to make it his permanent place of residence. Hadrat Wālā thought to himself that it was good that Hadrat Hājī Sāhib added the condition of "tired" because he did not think he would ever get tired of it, nor would the occasion come when he would have to leave it. However, the following couplet had to manifest itself:

> When you will something in a particular way, Allāh *taʿālā* also wills it in the same way. Allāh *taʿālā* fulfils the wishes of the righteous.

Allāh *taʿālā* had now willed for Hadrat Wālā to render a new type of service, viz. he had to take the place of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, establish himself as his representative, and to re-inhabit the old Khānqāh Imdādīyyah in Thānah Bhawan which during the time of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was given the title of the "Shop of Cognition" by the spiritual masters. It was now Hadrat Wālā's duty to reopen this "shop", re-illuminate it, and to make it the centre from which the teachings and sciences of the Imdādīyyah family will spread to the different corners of the world. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this is exactly what happened. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the Khānqāh became worthy of its old title once again.

Gradual Separation From The Kānpūr Madrasah

Hadrat Wālā intended to totally give up his teaching and other responsibilities in Kānpūr at the end of 1314 A.H. However, his excellent dealings, character, beautiful manner of teaching and lecturing had made the people of this city so attached to him,

that it was no easy task to leave them all of a sudden. Hadrat Wālā was able to leave them only after resorting to a beautiful plan and ensuring that he conceals his plans from them. Had they come to know of his intentions from the beginning, they would have never allowed him to leave. Glory to Allāh! By virtue of his Allāh-given intelligence and character, he resorted to an exceptional approach and withdrew gradually from the Madrasah so that the Madrasah authorities did not experience any setback in any of its departments nor was there any problem on the education side. These were matters which Hadrat Wālā was most concerned about – he did not want the Madrasah to be affected in any way by his departure.

Hadrat Wālā Does Not Take Any Wage

The first thing he did was he stopped taking a salary from the Madrasah. People were opposed to this because they felt that if he did not take a salary, he might decrease his contact with the Madrasah. They were also concerned about the loss which Hadrat Wālā will have to bear. Coincidentally, the Madrasah was experiencing a shortfall in its income. So he convinced them by saying: "The Madrasah income has decreased and I am the biggest expense of the Madrasah, i.e. fifty rupees per month. I will not take my salary for as long as the Madrasah does not get any additional income."

Hadrat Wālā Gives Up The Post Of Head-Teacher

Once he convinced everyone not to give him a wage, Hadrat Wālā set out to give up the post of head-teacher. The Madrasah used to publish a monthly newsletter. Hadrat Wālā published an announcement on behalf of the principal that the teachers in the Madrasah were not given promotions since quite some time. Therefore, teacher number one [Hadrat Wālā] is being promoted to the post of patron. Teacher number two, Maulānā Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib, is being promoted to the post of teacher number one, and so on. In this way, all the teachers are being promoted. Some people had their reservations about this and opposed it, but Hadrat Wālā scolded them by saying: "You people are not happy about my promotion and patronage!?" They all fell silent.

Teaching Arrangements

Hadrat Wālā took it on himself to teach those students who were on the verge of completing their studies. He managed to do this by saying: "They have lessons with several teachers who cannot give sufficient time to them. These students need more time with their teachers so that they can complete quickly. On the other hand, I have more than enough time on my hands. So I take the responsibility of teaching them altogether." Hadrat Wālā did this so that when he leaves, no student is affected in the least. These are students who are on the verge of completing and he would have completed teaching them by the time he decides to leave. In this way, their lessons will be completed and the remaining students will continue studying under the other teachers as they had been doing.

Moving Away From The Classroom

As for the classroom itself, Hadrat Wālā now began teaching in the musjid. The reason which he gave the Madrasah authorities was that those who are about to complete are quite a few, and the classroom in the Madrasah is small. He added: "Since I am not taking a wage, it is permissible for me to teach in the musjid. I will therefore teach in the musjid while my classroom will be occupied by Maulwī Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib, the teacher number one."

Giving Up Administrative Duties

In this subtle way, Hadrat Wālā literally handed over the Madrasah to Maulānā Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib by making him teacher number one and delegating other Madrasah affairs to him. In fact, a few administrative duties which were specifically carried out by Hadrat Wālā were given to him. Hadrat Wālā did this by offering the excuse that he does not have enough time. However, he added the condition that his own name will be written at the end of each document, although it was written by the Maulānā. Hadrat Wālā added this condition so that people do not suspect that he had plans to leave the Madrasah. Subsequently, the Maulānā would end each of the Madrasah documents as follows: "Ashraf ʿAlī, written by Muhammad Is-hāq." Even after Hadrat Wālā left the Madrasah, the Maulānā continued writing all the Madrasah documents in the same way. This continued for many years. The blessings of this was that even after Hadrat Wālā left, the

Madrasah continued running smoothly by Allāh's grace. It is running to this day, although its outlook has changed.

Hadrat Wālā Goes Home

Hadrat Wālā had no more classes to teach one his students completed their studies. As he had planned, he could easily offer the following excuse: "I had to bear many difficulties and hardships in teaching such a large number of students, and it has fatigued me quite a bit. I need a few days of rest." There were no restrictions on him because he had already given up taking a wage. He therefore took leave without any problems and proceeded to his hometown. But he did not inform anyone at all about his intention of giving up the Madrasah completely. However, a person from Thānah Bhawan did write to someone in Kānpūr and informed him about it. Hadrat Wālā had already informed some of his people at home about his intentions before leaving the Madrasah. The person in Kānpūr came to Hadrat Wālā and asked: "Is it true that you are leaving Kānpūr?" In order to conceal his plans, Hadrat Wālā scolded the person by saying: "Are you just waiting for me to leave this place? I am offended over the fact that you could even have such thoughts about me, and then to come and ask me about it." The matter ended there and then, and the rumour could not spread.

When Hadrat Wālā left, he did not take all his goods with him or else people would suspect that he was going for good. However, he had been packing all his goods and possessions since many days. When he was about to leave, he had all the packed goods kept in one place and locked up so that it would be easy to ask for them to be sent. Hadrat Wālā relates: "There was no end to my joy from the time the train left Kānpūr. I felt as if I was freed from a prison and I thanked Allāh *taʿālā* profusely."

Hadrat Wālā seemed to be reciting the following lines of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī while proceeding to his beloved hometown:

> Why should I not intend going to my city? Why should I not become the soil at the feet of my beloved?
>
> When I cannot bear to be in a strange place or to remain on a journey, I should rather proceed to my

city and I should myself become the city of my beloved.

I must become of those who are privy to the proximity of the beloved [Allāh] behind the veils and I must be included among the slaves of Allāh.

Being intoxicated in the love of my beloved [Allāh] has always been my occupation. I ought to renew my effort and become engrossed in my work.

Period Of Stay In Kānpūr

Hadrat Wālā left Kānpūr in 1315 A.H. It is gauged from some of his letters that he left in Safar of that year. He had commenced his services in that city in Safar 1301 A.H. This means that the Mujaddid of this century – there are strong indications to this effect in the books of tafsīr and Hadīth – commenced his religious services in Kānpūr at the very beginning of this century and continued imparting external sciences for a full period of fourteen years. By and large, the imparting of spiritual sciences commenced in Rabī' al-Awwal 1310 A.H.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib Is Informed

When Hadrat Wālā informed Hadrat Hājī Sāhib of his intention of settling down permanently in Thānah Bhawan, the latter expressed his extreme joy and wrote several prayers and supplications in his favour in many letters one after the other. He wrote with full confidence: "It is better that you came to Thānah Bhawan. I have hope that many people will benefit internally and externally from you and that this lineage will continue."

Supervising The Affairs Of Kānpūr Madrasah

Even for several months after returning to his hometown, Hadrat Wālā did not inform the people of Kānpūr of his intention of not going back there. He continued enquiring about Madrasah affairs and providing his counsel.

Once he was fully satisfied that everything was running smoothly and there was no fear of any negative impact on the administration of the Madrasah, he informed them that he did not intend returning to Kānpūr. He wrote the following most fitting couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* and sent it to them:

> My heart's attitude towards the doings of the Madrasah is such that I feel I should spend more time with my beloved and my drink.

The People Of Kānpūr Are Concerned

When Hadrat Wālā's letter reached the people of Kānpūr, there was no end to their worry and trepidation. They continued in their efforts to convince him to come back. After consulting among themselves, they eventually requested him earnestly to merely come and stay in Kānpūr without having any responsibilities whatsoever. Instead of paying him 50 rupees a month, they will continue paying him 100 rupees although he was not to do any work at all. The extent of their attachment to Hadrat Wālā can be gauged from this request. Instead of sending a cold reply to them, Hadrat Wālā wrote: "I decided to settle down in my hometown after receiving indications in this regard from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. You should rather write to Hadrat."

A Letter To Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

The people wrote a letter to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib in which they pleaded to him and begged him to permit Hadrat Wālā to live in Kānpūr. However, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib himself had been waiting for this to happen since a long time, why would he now give such a permission? Not only did he consider it appropriate for Hadrat Wālā to remain in Thānah Bhawan, he felt it essential for the benefit of Allāh's creation. This need is witnessed by all today. But at that time, it was only an insightful personality like Hadrat Hājī Sāhib who could have had such a strong opinion in this regard.

He writes in letter no. 49, dated 15 Muharram 1317 A.H.:

> I now write to you and say that it is essential for you to remain permanently in Thānah Bhawan. If you have some time during the holidays or at any other time when you feel like going there, you may visit and see to the people. As for the seekers, they must come to Thānah Bhawan – it is not so far from Kānpūr. I wrote the same thing in my letter to the people of Kānpūr.

As per Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's advice, Hadrat Wālā used to go to Kānpūr whenever the people there invited him. They used to

invite him regularly, and he used to respond happily. Hadrat Wālā loved them a lot and still does because of their love and devotion to him. But presently he has stopped travelling altogether.

Hājī Muhammad Ya'qūb Sāhib

Janāb Hājī Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib, the father of Janāb Hājī ʿAbd al-Qayyūm Sāhib, was not in Kānpūr at the time when Hadrat Wālā left Kānpūr. He was gone to Calcutta. When he returned, he was severely pained to hear about Hadrat Wālā's departure and his intention of not returning. He said to the people: "Why did you even allow him to go? Had I been here, I would have locked the Madrasah, put the Madrasah keys in his pocket, and told him that if he was bent on going, he must take the Madrasah with him." The people said: "But he did not even inform anyone of his intentions. No one even had an inkling that he was leaving with the intention of not coming back."

Hadrat Wālā's Intelligence

Hadrat Wālā's absolute intelligence, sharpness, sound planning and concern for the wellbeing of the Madrasah are clear and obvious. Normally, on such occasions people worry about their own advantages – especially when there is to be no contact with the Madrasah, who would ever worry about the wellbeing of the Madrasah?

It only happens with the will of Allāh. This is the grace of Allāh which He bestows on whomever He wills.

A NEW PERIOD OF HIS LIFE

A Life Of Reliance On Allāh

After devoting fourteen years of his life teaching in Kānpūr, Hadrat Wālā returned to his hometown. As per the instruction of his shaykh, he occupied himself in imparting external and internal blessings by way of his written works, discourses, assemblies, instruction and training. He lived a life of reliance on Allāh *taʿālā* and is continuing in this way to this day. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to benefit from him for a long period of time.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib wrote to him in letter no. 29, dated 16 Jumādā 1314 A.H.:

> I had written with absolute confidence in a previous letter that you must maintain your contact with Kānpūr for as long as Allāh *taʿālā* wills. You can then go to Thānah Bhawan after placing all your trust in Allāh *taʿālā* without entering into the employ of anyone. Allāh *taʿālā* is the Creator of the means, He will set right all your affairs. Inshā Allāh, you will not have to hesitate or doubt in any way.

This is exactly what happened. Allāh *taʿālā* blessed Hadrat Wālā with external riches and he is living like a king despite the fact that he is very strict and cautious about accepting gifts. He has laid down several conditions for the acceptance of gifts and will never accept them if any of his conditions are not met. Large amounts of money and many valuable items were returned and are still returned when his conditions are not met. Allāh *taʿālā* then give him far more in accordance with his conditions. All this is by the blessings and prayers of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. This is why Hadrat Wālā says that one of the etiquette of reliance on Allāh is that a person should not abandon the means without obtaining the opinion of one's shaykh.

An Incident Concerning Inherited Wealth

Hadrat Wālā did not want to accept some of his father's estate because he considered it doubtful. Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* said to him: "If you accept it, there is leeway from

the Sharīʿah for its acceptance. If you do not take it, Allāh *taʿālā* will never cause you any worry about your livelihood.” Since Hadrat Wālā enjoyed the prayers of such people, why should he not receive help from the unseen?

Two Dreams

Hadrat Wālā dreamt of a pond from which instead of water, silver was gushing forth and following him wherever he was going. Hadrat Maulānā Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* interpreted it as follows: “Inshā Allāh, the world will follow you wherever you go but you will not pay any attention to it.” All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this dream was realized.

Hadrat Wālā saw another dream with regard to authority and fame. It is written by Hadrat Wālā himself in *Asdaq ar-Ru’yā fī Tashrīf Baʿdil Ashrāf bi al-Bushrā*. It is quoted here:

> I saw a men’s drawing room similar to the one of my teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. On the terrace was a pious man who was very fastidious, wearing pure white clothes and seated on an elaborate couch. He wrote something on a piece of paper, stamped his seal on it and gave it to me. The writing of the stamp was on all sides of the paper. When I read it, it contained the words: “We gave you honour.” And the seal contained the word “Muhammad”. In the same dream I saw the men’s drawing room of a worldly person. A worldly ruler was seated at the table. He also wrote something on a piece of paper, stamped it with his seal and gave it to me. It contained the same words: “We gave you honour.” But the wording of the seal could not be read.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, both dreams were realized word for word. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred unparalleled honour of Dīn and this world to Hadrat Wālā. This is clearly visible to the world today. Many wealthy people, businessmen, people of authority, nawabs, rulers, and even some governors have been consulting Hadrat Wālā and continue to do so. Hadrat Wālā treats them respectfully in accordance with their rank, while maintaining his independence at the same time. Although this is not a basis to prove his acceptance in Allāh’s sight, it has been the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* to cause all sections of the community to incline

towards a person who is to be the centre of guidance and rectitude. Allāh *taʿālā* does this so that the personality's benefit and contribution is all-embracing.

Request For Prayers When In Debt

Hadrat Wālā was totally devoted to his reliance on Allāh *taʿālā* as per the instruction of his shaykh. But he incurred a few debts in the beginning. He requested Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* to pray in his favour and probably wrote to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib in this regard as well. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib wrote in his letter number 38, dated 6 Rajab 1315 A.H.: "I am praying for your success in your steadfastness and reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you with continued internal and external progress."

As for Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, he said to Hadrat Wālā: "If you wish I can make a recommendation in your favour for you to teach at the Madrasah in Deoband." Hadrat Wālā replied with absolute respect: "My purpose in mentioning it at present was solely to obtain your prayers. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib has prohibited me from taking up a job anywhere after leaving Kānpūr. But if this is really what Hadrat feels I should do, I would consider it to be an instruction from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and think to myself that Hadrat Hājī Sāhib has cancelled his previous instruction and issued this new instruction. After all, a new instruction abrogates the old one."

Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* became quite worried when he heard this and said: "No, no. If Hadrat Hājī Sāhib prohibited you in this regard, I can never advise you to the contrary. I will pray in your favour that Allāh *taʿālā* releases you from your debts."

Release From Debts

Through the blessings of the prayers of both personalities, Hadrat Wālā was released quite quickly from his debts. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he never experienced any poverty thereafter. He devoted himself to serving Allāh's creation with total peace of mind and tranquillity. This was especially so with regard to his written works and exhortations.

Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* used to be extremely pleased whenever he heard about Hadrat Wālā's services to the Dīn. On one occasion, while expressing his joy to Hadrat Wālā,

he said to him: “Brother! My heart will really be pleased when people assemble around you in order to engage in Allāh’s remembrance.” Hadrat Wālā replied: “Inshā Allāh, that will also be realized through your prayers.” This wish of Hadrat Maulānā was soon fulfilled and seekers began reverting to Hadrat Wālā in large numbers. This programme is increasing day after day.

Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* would periodically send seekers to Hadrat Wālā. In fact, he had started doing this when Hadrat Wālā was still based in Kānpūr.

A Few Spiritual Conditions After Settling Down In Thānah Bhawan

The various spiritual conditions, changes and fluctuations in the spiritual path which were experienced by Hadrat Wālā at different times until the year 1314 A.H. were described in detail in the previous pages. A new phase of his life - the phase after he settled down permanently in Thānah Bhawan - commences from 1315 A.H. This phase is described now.

It is naturally extremely important because Hadrat Wālā severed all obligations and devoted himself totally to traversing the path of Sufism and freed himself totally for this purpose. He came and settled down permanently in Khānqāh Imdādīyyah Thānah Bhawan for the same purpose. What can be said of the spiritual progress which he made here! He became so overpowered with the closeness which he experienced with Allāh *taʿālā* that he became terrified by all associates. At the same time, his heart could not tolerate impoliteness. He was forced into thinking of severing his ties completely from all people and to live somewhere away from everyone. Despite this intense desire, he felt it most inappropriate to take any such step without consulting the elders. Subsequently, he complained to Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* about the large numbers of people who were coming to him and sought his permission to stay out of the town. Hadrat Gangohī did not permit him. He said: “This has not been the way of our elders. It is most inappropriate to do such a thing. But if your heart is not inclined to people and you feel they are imposing on you, stay aloof from them and do not bother about them. If you yourself feel constricted by them, why should you display any politeness towards them?” The following couplet applies here:

I am prepared to sacrifice those thousands who are strangers to Allāh *taʿālā* for that one person who is His true friend.

Hadrat Wālā accepted and acted on Hadrat Gangohī's advice. The words of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* apply here:

I have attached myself to You and cut off myself from all apart from You. When a person gains Your cognition, he does not bother about anyone else.

Hadrat Wālā began spending most of his time in solitude and private conversations with his True Beloved. Hadrat Āshiftah *rahimahullāh* says in a couplet:

It is so lovely to sit in your company. I can speak in whispers with you. The door of the house is shut and I can open the bottle.

Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* says:

Thinking of your face and locks of hair is the prescribed morning and evening remembrance for me.

Prelude To Retraction

In short, after giving up his teaching post in Kānpūr, Hadrat Wālā came to his beloved hometown, Thānah Bhawan, settled down in Khānqāh Imdādīyyah and became engrossed with Allāh *taʿālā*.

He disregarded his own body in his love for his beloved. He disregarded the entire world in his remembrance of his beloved.

For some time, Hadrat Wālā became a manifestation of the following couplets of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*:

O you who reserve a place in the alley of the tavern! Although you are sitting with your hands concealed in your garments, you are the Jamshed[1] of your time.

O you who spends his days and nights thinking of the face and hair-locks of his beloved! You have the

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[1] Name of an ancient king of Persia.

> opportunity because you are a good person in the morning and at night.

Hadrat Wālā continued traversing his journey towards Allāh *taʿālā* and got closer and closer to him with absolute peace of mind and serenity. But where is there eternal peace in love?! Love is like an eternal illness – a lover does not get peace until the very end of his life. A drop in spiritual conditions is from among the essentials of Sufism. This is gauged from verses of the Qur'ān, Ahādīth and statements[1] of the spiritual masters. These will be quoted later on.

Changes In The Condition Of A Seeker

As per the norm of Allāh *taʿālā*, the quickest way a seeker can progress in the path is for him not to remain stagnant in one condition. Allāh *taʿālā* almost always treats the seekers in this way. They experience retraction and expansion, fear and hope, fright and affinity, ascent and descent. In short, a seeker experiences ups and downs during different times and places of his journey, and in different forms. This separation and joining are described as follows:

> You summoned me and then you pushed me away.
> You pushed me away and then you called me again.

> The city is deserted and the forest is filled with flowers. O love! You have conveyed me to so many different places.

A seeker constantly experiences changes in his conditions. His heart - which is essentially a reflection of the True Beloved – sometimes experiences the beauty of the Beloved and sometimes His power and might. These are really the rays of one light. Hadrat Hāfiz describes it as follows:

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[1] When a person experiences spiritual conditions of this type, it is most beneficial for him to read the statements of the spiritual masters. Most of them are written in the form of poetry. This biography – especially this chapter – contains many such poems. The seekers of different temperaments may study them and apply them – either in totality or partially – according to their own temperaments. These poems are not the essential objectives of this biography.

> The reflection on this drink and the opposing picture which you see are actually manifestations of the face of the drink provider which has fallen on the goblet.

Every act of the beloved is beloved in the eyes of the lover. Hadrat Hāfiz says:

> O you whose every form is beautiful and every place is pleasing! My heart is pleased with the slightest thanks which emanates from your mouth.
>
> Your existence is delicate like the petals of a flower. You are an embodiment of beauty like the head of the orchard.
>
> The garden of my thoughts is filled with flowers and buds because of you. The pores of my heart are filled with happiness because of your beautiful hair-locks.
>
> The manner of your coquetry is sweet and effects of your gazes are salty. Your eyes and tears are beautiful, your height is captivating.
>
> I die right before your eyes because when I see your beautiful face, the same old illness hurts me.
>
> There are dangers from all sides in the jungle of obliteration. I am overjoyed by your friendship and cannot contain myself.

In accordance with this overpowering divine quality, after Hadrat Wālā severed ties with his associates while remaining in his hometown for about a year, he had to face a terrifying and difficult obstacle in the path of spiritual progress. His heart suddenly experienced a condition which completely annihilated the internal peace and tranquillity which he had been enjoying for some time. He fell into a severe worry and grief, and he seemed to be saying:

> You have inflicted an unseen injury on my chest. I am astonished at how you shot an arrow without a bow.

This was a very important stage in Hadrat Wālā's spiritual life, and probably the last obstacle in his path. Before providing details in this regard, I consider it appropriate to give it a title so that it could be highlighted. The title is:

Lost In Fright

Before I can relate this story of grief, I quote a poem which was written by Hadrat Wālā himself:

> You have seen how I drink, now see how I sting. You saw my comfortable living, now see my injury.

I now commence with the name of Allāh *taʿālā* and provide details in this regard:

> We placed our heart in this endless ocean and stormy sea. Its sailing and its anchor is in the name of Allāh.

This terrifying episode commences with a sudden murder. The following couplet applies to it:

> I do not know what the letter contains. But what I do see is that its address has been written with blood.

Commencement Of Grief

Details are as follows: Hadrat Wālā's senior wife had an uncle who was a landlord and pensioner sub-inspector of Charthāwal. There was a dispute with some farmers who eventually martyred him. The moment Hadrat Wālā's senior wife received this dreadful news, she proceeded to Charthāwal with Hadrat Wālā. All the burial arrangements were carried out under his supervision. Even the bathing of the deceased was done in Hadrat Wālā's presence. In the course of bathing him, the scene of the injured head of the deceased and the sorrowful state of his body remained before Hadrat Wālā all the time. The scene severely injured Hadrat Wālā's sensitive and pining heart. But he did not seem to be affected by it at the time. He was occupied by all the burial arrangements with absolute calm. After the burial, he returned to the funeral house, sat on the porch and heard the crying of the women from inside. His heart was already injured from before. But when he heard the crying, he was struck by a fatal wound in his heart. He became restless and severely depressed to the extent of perceiving a type of palpitation.

His heart had not gotten over this one tragedy when another tragedy struck his in-laws' family. He had to go to Gangoh for this purpose. His injured heart now received another blow, and his wounded heart suffered another wound. Although the

second tragedy was not as serious as the previous one, it helped to increase the severity of the previous one.

Displeased With Life

Hadrat Wālā's heart was becoming seriously affected by this situation. While he was performing ablution for the tahajjud salāh, a terrible thought crossed his mind unwittingly. It essentially comprised of a few words which suddenly fell in his imagination. This was not something new because such fears are normally experienced by the seekers. In fact, even the Companions *radiyallāhu 'anhum* experienced them. This is categorically proven from the Hadīth:

ذاك صريح الإيمان

That is a clear indication of īmān.

Hadrat Wālā must have experienced similar fears in the past. But the fear on this occasion was so severe and so intense that he became displeased with life. A poet says:

> There is no joy in life without a friend. The same joy cannot be experienced when a friend is not present.

Hadrat Wālā even experienced whisperings of suicide. He relates: "A person came to visit me on one occasion. He had a loaded gun with him. The thought came several times in my mind to say to him: 'Fire the gun and purify this world of my impure existence.' The reason for this is that after experiencing this condition and these thoughts, I considered myself to be worse than Pharaoh and Hāmān, although I did consider myself to be a believer and them to be unbelievers. Since this has to do with personal preferences, I cannot explain it in a simpler manner. I felt that the calamity in which they [Pharaoh and Hāmān] were was such that they could have got freedom from it in a single minute by merely accepting īmān. Whereas I cannot obtain freedom from my calamity even after several years."

Hadrat Wālā's Note On The Above Situation

The above condition and its irrationality can be easily refuted by the following traditional proofs:

في رسالة القشيرية عن حمدون (المتوفى ٢٧١) قال من ظن أن نفسه خير من نفس فرعون فقد أظهر الكبر.

H̲amdūn (d. 271 A.H.) states in Risālah al-Qushayrīyyah*: If a person considers his self to be better than the self of Pharaoh, he has certainly expressed pride.*

A stronger but more cautious explanation than the above is the following statement of the S̲ah̲ābī, H̲ad̲rat Usāmah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu*:

حتى تمنيت ...إلى...أسلمت يومئذ. رواه مسلم في باب تحريم قتل الكافر بعد قوله لا إله إلا الله، من كتاب الإيمان

He had made this statement after a judgemental error on his part in a certain jihād. Imām Nawawī *rah̲imahullāh* says in his commentary to it:

معناه لم يكن تقدم إسلامي بن ابتدأت الآن الإسلام لمحو عني ما تقدم، وقال هذا الكلام من عظم ما وقع فيه. وجه الدلالة ظاهر حيث رجح بعض الأحوال المذمومة على بعض الأحوال المحمودة لكون الأول أقرب إلى دفع الضرر من الثاني لعارض مع أن حقيقة الأمر عكسه في نفسه.

This means: "I had no past Islam. I commenced with Islam now because whatever I had done before this was all wiped out." He said this because of the serious nature of what he had done…The proof from this incident is obvious in the sense that he gave preference to certain blameworthy conditions over certain praiseworthy conditions because the former were more likely to repulse the harm than the latter because of an obstacle. This despite the fact that the real situation is the opposite in itself.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā said with regard to the severity of this condition: "A major problem was that when I used to sit to engage in dhikr – which is actually a condition of closeness with Allāh *taʿālā* – that detestable fear would return to me. If I wanted to stop dhikr – a condition of aloofness from Allāh *taʿālā* - in order to save myself from the fear returning, my heart could not bear it in any way. It was as though I was experiencing the following condition:

> I am the candle which melts away life. You are the morning which brings joy to the heart. If I do not see you, I burn. If you enable me to see you, I die.
>
> I am so close. I am as far as I said I am. I neither have the courage to join myself with you, nor the strength to separate myself from you.

In short, I was caught up in a severe conflict. It was such a harsh condition that although I was physically healthy, I preferred death thousands of times over life."

Reasons Why Hadrat Wālā's Fear Intensified

Hadrat Wālā relates: "There were three reasons why this terrible fear had such an impact on me:

(1) Consecutive calamities (which were mentioned previously) had injured and melted the heart from the very beginning. This resulted in a condition of sorrow and negativity which made it susceptible to the fear. When this fear descended, the heart could not combat it nor fight back because of its weakness and depression. This is why it settled down easily in the heart.

(2) After leaving Kānpūr, I went into extremes in abstaining from permissible occupations and kept my heart totally aloof from all interactions. Later on, experience thought me that such excesses are harmful because while the heart has been emptied of these interactions on one hand, on the other hand it cannot be filled with anything else because the unseen world is something which we cannot see. Thus, in this condition when the heart was empty, Satan got an excellent opportunity to cast whisperings into it. It is stated in a Hadīth that when the outward form of Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* was created, Satan walked around him and inspected him carefully. When he saw that he was empty on the inside, he became very happy and realized that if this is his natural disposition, he will not be able to control himself. (In other words, since he is empty from inside, it will be easy for me to get into him). The Hadīth reads as follows:

عن أنس أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لما صور الله آدم في الجنة تركه ما شاء الله أن يتركه، فجعل إبليس يطيف به فينظر ما هو، فلما رآه أجوف عرف أنه خلق خلقا لا يتمالك. رواه مسلم.

Anas radiyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said: "When Allāh* taʿālā *created the form of Ādam in Paradise, He left him like that for some time. Satan began walking around him to see what he really was. When he saw that he was empty and hollow inside, he realized that Allāh* taʿālā *created a creation which will not be able to control itself."*

(3) The fear appeared to be contradictory to perfection in love [for Allāh *taʿālā*]. This is why it was extremely difficult for me."

I [the author] say: A fear which appeared to be contradictory to perfection in love and was yet able to cause so much of grief and distress was really an indication of perfection in love. As per the words of the Hadīth:

ذاك صريح الإيمان

That is a clear indication of īmān.

However, an outer perfection in love is enough to cause restlessness later on. A poet says in this regard:

> The heart of a seeker experiences thousands of sorrows even though there is no shortage of happiness in it.

Steps To Putting An End To The Fear

After explaining the three causes of the intense and prolonged fear, Hadrat Wālā said: "From my experience, I learnt three very beneficial procedures and courses of action for the seekers to put an end to the three causes of fear.

1. As far as possible, a seeker must resort to fortifying tonics and refreshing practices to strengthen and relax the heart. He must try to abstain from distressing causes so that the heart remains strong and he is able to bear such conditions. A sorrowful incident which is beyond one's control (e.g. the death of someone) is from among the strong causes of distress to the heart. This is irrespective of whether the sorrow

is because of one's own pain, out of concern for another or the effect of the definite or assumed consequences of the incident playing in one's mind all the time or speaking about it verbally. In other words, to wilfully think about it and delve into it or to speak a lot about it. This causes considerable damage to the heart and results in its distress and perplexity. Although it is not within one's control to be naturally saddened by a bloody incident and also not harmful, thinking of it all the time and speaking about it repeatedly is certainly within one's control and also harmful.

This is why the texts [of the Qur'ān and Hadīth] contain instructions such as "do not worry". The fact that such a prohibition exists means that it is within one's control. Just as it is in one's power to continue the grief, it is also within one's power to put an end to it. Experience – supported by proofs – teaches us that the heart must be made to become preoccupied in some other important obligatory or permissible act, or in some act of obedience. This is also supported by the teaching to read *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rājiʿūn* (to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return). After all, it is essentially a special way of introspection at the time of consoling another. The Sharʿī and linguistic term for this – *istirjāʿ*[1] - also supports what I am saying [*istirjāʿ* - means: to get back, to recover, to regain]. The statement of a gnostic clearly backs this:

كما في طبقات الكبرى عن الحسين بن عبد الصنجي قال: لا يقطعك شيء عن شيء إلا إذا كان القاطع أتم وأكمل وأعلى عندك، فإن كان مثله أو دونه فلا يقطعك، فالحكم لما غلب على القلب.

As stated in Tabaqāt al-Kubrā *from al-Husayn ibn ʿAbdillāh as-Sanjī who said: Do not allow anything to cut you off from another unless the first [cutter] is better, superior to and higher according to you. If it is equal to it or lower, do not allow it to cut you off from it. The ruling is in favour of what overpowers the heart.*

I added the condition of "excessive" in my prohibition to thinking of a sorrowful incident. This is because to abstain from talking about it completely and "bottling" oneself totally from the incident have also proven to be harmful. When all the dust and murkiness remain "bottled" inside all the time, it

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[1] The word *istirjāʿ* refers to saying: *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rājiʿūn.*

causes a withdrawal in one's temperament and the strength to fight the sorrow decreases. It would therefore be wise to occasionally speak about the sorrowful incident in the beginning in a balanced manner and within the limits of the Sharīʿah to a religious-minded well-wisher. This is also supported by Ahādīth. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* cried when his son, Hadrat Ibrāhīm, passed away and he said:

إنا بفراقك يا إبراهيم محزونون

O Ibrāhīm! We are saddened by your departure.

When showing your concern for another, ensure it is within the limit. The limit is that it must benefit the other without harming your own self. Thus, a rational concern is sufficient. A natural concern must be kept within the limit to the extent that it is needed for the rational concern to be effective. Do not allow it to go beyond this limit. If not, experience has shown that it too is harmful. Too much of concern and feeling sorry for another disturb the heart. Sometimes, this results in thoughts which are contradictory to accepting divine decree, and this is most dangerous.

(2) Do not go to extremes in abstaining from permissible occupations and do not opt for total solitude so that the heart is occupied in such things which would prevent fears of this nature from entering it. If a person wants to remove the air which is in a bottle, a simple way of doing it is to fill it with water. Air will neither remain inside nor will it be able to enter. The same applies to the heart. When the unseen [blessings of Allāh *taʿālā*] are not settled in it, lawful occupations act as shields against fears. It is common sense that the self cannot focus totally and equally on two things at the same time. However, it should be borne in mind that this does not include increasing one's love for these lawful occupations because love for them is also harmful. Mere organizational interactions and diversions are enough. For example, arrangements for one's livelihood, a little recreation, reading history books and so on.

(3) The best way of putting an end to intense and prolonged fears is to disregard them totally. Do not even turn your attention towards them. In fact, do not even turn to them with the intention of repulsing them. You should rather turn your attention to dhikr and occupy yourself in it. But here too, do not go to extremes in your attention to it and do not be

overenthusiastic. If you persist in doing this, you will get tired and bored and the fears will start taking a toll on you. After you commence your dhikr, do not wait to see if the fears disappeared or not because although you have focussed on one thing, if other thoughts enter unwittingly, they are not obstacles to your focus. There are many things in one's treasure of thoughts; they will certainly come before you.

This is similar to a person focusing on a single central dot which is surrounded by many other dots. Although he will see the other dots in his peripheral vision, his focus will remain on the single central dot."

The above were procedures to prevent the onset of intense and prolonged fears. But if such fears have already been experienced – as was the case with Hadrat Wālā – the procedures to put an end to them will be explained later on. We should rather complete the details concerning the present tribulation of Hadrat Wālā. These will be followed by the mysteries and wisdom of Allāh *taʿālā* in causing this tribulation. And then – insha Allāh – we will write on the procedures to put an end to intense and prolonged fears. In following this sequence, we now present the remaining details of the incidents.

Hadrat Gangohī's Advice

We mentioned previously that it was a good coincidence that the tribulation commenced at the time of tahajjud when Hadrat Wālā was staying over in Gangoh. He therefore proceeded to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* the next morning and described his condition to him with a view to obtaining a treatment from him. Hadrat Maulānā advised him not to pay any attention to it.

Bouts Of Palpitation Of The Heart

Hadrat Wālā returned to Thānah Bhawan. The above-mentioned causes resulted in severe withdrawal symptoms in the heart. The fears therefore came to him again and again, and intensified by the day. This resulted in even more withdrawals, causing severe bouts of palpitation of the heart and Hadrat Wālā became extremely weak within a few days as though he had been ill for a very long time.

The Treatment Of Hakīm Muhammad Siddīq Gangohī

Hakīm Maulwī Muhammad Siddīq Gangohī had come from Garhī Pukhta to Thānah Bhawan. So Hadrat Wālā decided to obtain treatment from him. Maulwī Muhammad Yūnus Sāhib Marhūm who was a student and also murīd of Hadrat Wālā took a sample of Hadrat Wālā's urine to the Hakīm Sāhib. The moment he saw it, the Hakīm Sāhib said: "I am astonished at how this man is still alive. His urine clearly portrays that the natural heat of his body is totally finished. The Maulwī Sāhib returned to Hadrat Wālā and, in his naivety, conveyed the exact words of the Hakīm Sāhib to him. Hadrat Wālā scolded and reprimanded him for his foolishness and asked him: "Does a person ever say such things to a patient?! And that too when he is a heart patient?" The Maulwī Sāhib regretted his action and said: "I have certainly been foolish, but its already done, what can I do now?" Hadrat Wālā said: "Take this urine sample back and when you are still on your way to the Hakīm Sāhib, return without showing it to him. When you come back to me, you must tell me: "I took the urine sample again to the Hakīm Sāhib and he says that his previous diagnosis was wrong. The person whose urine sample you brought is very healthy and there is nothing to worry about.'" The Maulwī Sāhib who was still like a student, objected: "Of what use will that be? You yourself are sending me and telling me to say all these things." Hadrat Wālā said: "That is of no concern to you. Just do as I am instructing you. Allāh *taʿālā* has placed a certain effect in words as well." The Maulwī Sāhib did as he was told and Hadrat Wālā certainly felt much better than the previous time when the Maulwī Sāhib had brought the bad news to him. The reason for this was that during those days, his heart had become extremely fragile and was affected by the smallest of things. And why should this not be the case when there is no illness as severe as illness of the heart.

Self-Prepared Treatment

When he did not experience any benefit from the Hakīm Sāhib's treatment, Hadrat Wālā decided to treat himself by going on a journey. He felt he ought to travel and go to meet his friends and relatives. As we had explained previously, Hadrat Wālā had realized that one of the causes of his distress was his excessive abstention from permissible actions. When Hadrat Wālā decided to undertake the journey, some of his close

associates went to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī and said: "We are benefiting tremendously from him. You must stop him from undertaking this journey." Hadrat Gangohī was fully aware of Hadrat Wālā's condition, so he said: "No. It would be best for him to go on a journey at present. He should certainly not be stopped."

Another measure which Hadrat Wālā adopted was that he borrowed a gun which he used to take to the open fields and fire it without aiming at any target. This also benefited him because the mere sound of the gun blast brought joy to his heart.

The Effect Of Hadrat Gangohī's Instruction

On one hand, Hadrat Wālā adopted these beneficial measures on the basis that he was a shaykh who was fully conversant with the ways of training and an expert in the emotions of one's disposition. On the other side, he also explained his situation to Hadrat Gangohī by writing to him and also by presenting himself before him. Hadrat Wālā relates: "From the very beginning until right at the end, Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī remained steadfast on this one instruction that I must not pay any attention to the fears. He continued emphasizing this point. This demonstrates the Maulānā's high level of instruction. In addition to this, he also paid particular attention to praying for me." Hadrat Wālā adds: "This one instruction of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī – do not pay any attention to your fears – is sufficient proof of his erudition in this field."

Extracts From Hadrat Gangohī's Letters

I now quote a few extracts from Hadrat Gangohī's letters which are connected to the above condition which was experienced by Hadrat Wālā.

First Letter

I received your letter which exposed your sentiments. If this fear and worry is with regard to the Hereafter, it is praiseworthy (this was essentially the case because if a person is naturally worried over a disliked matter, the reason for it can be nothing but love for Allāh *taʿālā*). The very same fear caused the elders to suffer from severe retraction to the extent that

some of them died in the process. Hadrat Shaykh says in this regard:

> Friends lost their lives out of remorse that the heavens placed dust on their heads.

Such a condition is therefore a cause of gratitude and not of worry. The same worry caused Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* to remain worried and grief-stricken for ten years in Bayt al-Maqdis because the physicians could not treat him. Eventually a Jewish physician checked him and diagnosed that he does not have any physical ailment. Rather, it is fear of the Hereafter for which there is no treatment.

Glad tidings over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* blessed you with this fortune. Thousands of joys can be sacrificed for a worry of this nature, and death in such a condition is the greatest martyrdom.

If the fear is because of some other matter, I cannot provide an answer without first asking you about the actual situation. You asked me about coming here. As per the saying: How can a lost person be a guide? Despite this, if you were to come here, I myself expect it to be beneficial because companionship of the righteous is always a boon. That is all. Peace be to you.

Second Letter

I gauged your condition from your letter. I am praying for your wellbeing…the whisperings and fear of an evil death are also mere imaginations. You must continue repulsing them as much as you can. Rewards and atonement of sins are also certain, if Allāh *taʿālā* wills…15 Shaʿbān 1316 A.H.

Glad Tidings From Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

In addition to reverting to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī, Hadrat Wālā continued apprising Hadrat Hājī Sāhib of his conditions and he received instructions, glad tidings and prayers from him. He writes in letter no. 44, dated 1 Rajab 1316 A.H.: "All praise is due to Allāh, the condition of your heart is excellent. This is the station of fear and hope. It is referred to as *haybat wa uns*. Sometimes one overpowers the other, but both should be considered to be the same.

He writes in letter no. 45, dated 19 Rajab 1316 A.H.: I received your second letter as well. I wrote the answer in your first

letter. I repeat: Your spiritual condition is excellent. Inshā Allāh you will not be harmed. I am praying…when you experience anything in your heart, consider it to be from Allāh *taʿālā*. Those that are harmful will be repulsed by this meditation.

He writes in letter no. 46 dated 8 Shaʿbān 1316 A.H.: Your spiritual condition is excellent. I mentioned this previously…Pitfalls of this nature are normally experienced by a seeker. Inshā Allāh you will pass them all. I am praying for you (surely He is all-hearing, most near).

He writes in letter no. 47, dated 22 Shawwāl 1316 A.H.: Māshā Allāh your spiritual condition is excellent. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you in it. Whatever little reservation remains will also be removed. I am praying to Allāh *taʿālā* to include you among His devoted and sincere servants.

He also praised his condition in letter no. 48, dated 14 Dhū al-Hijjah 1316 A.H. He then writes in letter no. 49, dated 15 Muharram 1316 A.H.: All praise is due to Allāh your condition is now excellent. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to bless you with progress.

It is gauged from the dates of the incidents and letters that Hadrat Wālā experienced this fear for about a year. It could be referred to as his year of grief during his era of treading the path of Sufism.

The Tribulation Intensifies

No one apart from Hadrat Wālā himself can correctly gauge the severity of his condition. The following couplets apply:

> The dark night, the dangerous waves and the whirlpool which engulfed me. How can the person who is sitting comfortably on the shore know about my situation?
>
> O you whose feet have never been pricked by a thorn! What do you know of the condition of those lions who bear the swords of calamities over their heads?

A seeker wrote to Hadrat Wālā with a lengthy description of his intense spiritual worries. Hadrat Wālā replied to his letter which is quoted in *al-Ibtilā’ li Ahl al-Istifā’*. He writes therein: “The constrictions, calamities, trials and tribulations which you

described are not even one percent of what is experienced by some people. At present, I recall the conditions of some people [Hadrat Wālā is referring to himself]. These conditions have shaken me from head to toe. It was extremely difficult for me to control myself and not stop myself from writing this reply to you…(quoted from the introduction to *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*). This letter is dated 18 Muharram 1332 A.H. i.e. fifteen years after the expiry of the overpowering fear which Hadrat Wālā had experienced. Merely thinking about it caused him to tremble from head to toe. The reader can gauge from this that if merely recalling his spiritual condition after a lengthy period of fifteen years could have such an effect on him, what he must have been going through during the period when he was in the midst of it?

In short, the condition which we are describing was a very severe and critical condition. It could have only been borne by a magnanimous and firm in īmān personality like Hadrat Wālā through the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and the attention of pious elders. Had it been anyone else, he would have lost his senses and certainly lost his īmān or life, or both in the process. I myself am aware of the conditions of some people who went through such dangerous stages that had they not recovered quickly through Allāh's grace and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, they would have been rendered absolutely useless, both in religion and in worldly matters. They had been reduced far beyond both the worlds, whereas, as per the statement of Hadrat Wālā their condition was not even one percent of the condition which he had to go through.

A Statement Of Hadrat Hājī Sayyid Muhammad 'Ābid

Hadrat Wālā's humility and genuine quest are also worthy of thousands of praises. Although he himself was a spiritual master, he never considered himself independent of the elders. Whenever the need arose, he did not hesitate in the least to consult not only his shaykh, but even the senior khulafā' of his shaykh and to present his case to them. In addition to describing his condition to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu*, he described it to Hadrat Hājī Sayyid Muhammad ʿĀbid Deobandī *rahimahullāh* who was a khalīfah of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. On hearing his condition, Hadrat Sayyid Sāhib consoled him and said: "You must think to yourself that these fears are not entering your heart but leaving it. When a thief gets into a

house in order to steal, his eyes are still focused on the door. If he starts to flee after hearing the house people waking up, he is seen at the door.” After relating this statement, Hadrat Wālā says: “I had always considered Hājī Muhammad ʿĀbid Sāhib to be a pious elder, but the truth of the matter is that I did not consider him to be a shaykh and spiritual mentor of such a level. But after hearing this statement, I realized he was a shaykh and erudite mentor as well.”

Obstacles On The Path Are Crossed

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the attention, procedures and prayers of the pious elders, Hadrat Wālā crossed this difficult and final valley in the path of Sufism. Look at the wonderful coincidence: Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had given him the glad tidings: “Inshā Allāh you will cross all the valleys.” This was realized while Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was still alive. The latter passed away a few months after Hadrat Wālā came out of this tribulation. It was as though he enabled Hadrat Wālā to cross all the valleys in his very presence and the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz Shirāzī applied to him:

> Those long nights of worry and the sorrow of the heart finally came to an end in the shadow of the hair-locks of the beloved.

Two Odes Of Hāfiz Shīrāzī

At this point, I recall two odes of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*. The first is appropriate to Hadrat Wālā’s condition of tribulation, and the second to his condition of peace. Both are quoted here because of their aptness.

The First Ode

> My life is leaving me but my objective is not being fulfilled by you. O my kismet is not getting up from its sleep.
>
> Look at the face of my beloved who can repair the condition of the heart. You will not be able to accomplish anything in any other way.
>
> How unfortunate that my dear life passed by with these thoughts that the affliction of your black hair-locks is not coming to an end.

I am dying with this regret in the soil of your threshold because I cannot see the water which would give me life.

Many episodes of the heart are connected to the morning breeze, but as luck would have it, the night too did not arrive today.

As long as I do not pluck fruit from your tall stature, fruits will not bear on the tree of my objective.

The heart which harboured good hopes in your hair-locks has now settled down in one place. Now there is no news about the traveller who has fallen in this calamity.

My morning arrow never missed its mark. What has happened now that not even a single one is hitting its target?!

This is why the heart of Ḫāfiẕ has come to detest everyone. Now it cannot leave the circle of your hair-lock.

The Second Ode

The days and nights of separation from the beloved have come to an end. I took this good omen out of it that ʿīd has passed and the task has been completed.

All that coquetry and luxury which were decaying eventually came to an end at the feet of the spring breeze.

After obtaining this light, we are taking our hearts out of the world because we have reached the sun and soil is finished.

Those long nights of worry and the sorrow of the heart finally came to an end in the shadow of the hair-locks of the beloved.

O cup-bearer! May you live long and may your cup remain filled with drink because it was through your efforts that my sorrow and intoxication ended.

All thanks are due to Allāh that through the appearance of the flower buds, the haughtiness of

> the autumn wind and the awe of the thorns have ended.
>
> Say to the morning of hope which had been hiding behind the veil of seclusion to come out so that the work of the dark night may come to an end.
>
> Although the worry of my work was because of your hair-locks, this knot too was untied by the face of the beloved.
>
> Although no one thought anything of Hāfiz, all thanks over the fact that the limitless and countless hardships came to an end.

Hadrat Wālā Stops Bay'ah And Instruction

During the period when Hadrat Wālā was experiencing these fearful conditions, he stopped accepting bay'ah from anyone, and paused all instruction and training. He was fully occupied in his own concerns by day and night, where did he have the time and awareness to see to others? The seekers would persist but he would excuse himself. His integrity imposed on him to clearly say to them: "It would be most unproductive for you to revert to me because I myself am caught up in my own grief." Despite this, a person in Bareilly insisted and although Hadrat Wālā warned him that he will not benefit in any way, he persisted and pledged bay'ah to Hadrat Wālā. But as Hadrat Wālā had said, no changes took place in the person's condition; and Hadrat Wālā's prediction that he will not benefit in any way proved absolutely correct.

Hadrat Wālā's Personal Description Of His Fear

I related the necessary incidents related to Hadrat Wālā's internal spiritual condition, viz. the overpowering fear which he experienced. I now quote the exact words of Hadrat Wālā himself which he wrote briefly in his book, *Yād Yārān* under the section on Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī's favours to him.

The second favour is connected to my internal self. If I have to go into details, I will have to expose certain secrets. Furthermore, the story is extremely terrifying and unpleasant. I will therefore suffice with a brief description. Because of my evil deeds and many acts of disobedience (these bad thoughts are themselves worthy of emulation – author), I experienced a

severe condition. Although I was physically sound, I became despondent with life and gave preference to death thousands of times over life. I cannot describe it in any other way:

> Majnūn's life has a double calamity and pain. One is at the time when separation from Laylā commences and the other is at the time of her death.

It was during this period when Hadrat [Gangohī] *quddisa sirruhu* turned his special attention to me with prayers, instruction and encouragement; enabling me to maintain my senses and giving life to my life. I then perceived the benefits of this condition and of its departure. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. I will never forget these two favours[1] [of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*]. The one who is not grateful to people cannot be grateful to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Retraction And Fear Are Replaced By Expansion And Affinity

I [the author] present the following couplets of Hadrat Shīrāzī with absolute respect and joy to my Hadrat Wālā as a way of congratulation.

> O Hāfiz! The night of separation has passed and I am getting the fragrance of the morning. O you mad lover! Congratulations on your happiness.
>
> The treasure of meeting has arrived, the pain of separation has passed. The time has come once again for the kingdom of the heart to inhabit itself.

The intense and prolonged tribulation which was detailed above was the most difficult and final valley in Hadrat Wālā's spiritual path. He crossed it by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and the attention of his elders, and was once again honoured with spiritual tranquillity and internal clarity. His previous condition of expansion, affinity, enthusiasm and yearning returned to him.

> My water has returned to my river. My master has returned to my alley.
>
> O doctor! I have become mad once again. O beloved! I have become crazy once again.

---

[1] The first favour was with regard to external knowledge which was quoted previously in the appropriate chapter.

The expansion and affinity which came after the intense and prolonged tribulation were – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – unique, never ending, and forever progressing. The clarity and tranquillity which were acquired were most firmly embedded and on the increase. Based on this excellent conclusion, Hadrat Wālā's severe tribulation proved to be a manifestation of the following couplet of Hadrat ʿIrāqī:

> That pain is very good if you are its cure. That path is excellent if you are its end.

Addendum: An Explanation Of Stability And Firmness

I consider it necessary to explain the condition of stability and firmness. The Sufis refer to it as a *maqām*. The explanation of this condition is essential so that no misunderstanding may occur. When a seeker reaches the state of *maqām*, it does not mean that he does not experience changes in his condition at all. According to Hadrat Wālā, temporary changes are from among the essentials of Sufis. Even after total and perfect stability and firmness are acquired, the seekers experience changes in their conditions. However, there is no intensity, continuation and transgression in them. For example, after a person acquires total physical health and a balance in his disposition, he still experiences certain ailments due to changes in the weather or other external factors. Sometimes he catches a cold, sometimes he feels weary, and sometimes he even experiences a fever. However, temporary ailments of this nature do not negate his normal healthy state. In short, the major condition is considered. If the effects of *maqām* are overriding in a seeker, we will say he is a man of *maqām*. Occasionally he will experience certain conditions. But if the conditions overwhelm him, we will say he is a man of conditions [and not a man of *maqām*] even though he may occasionally display the effects of *maqām*. Like the person of sound disposition in whom the effects of good health are overriding, but he experiences a lapse occasionally. As for the person in whom the effects of illness are overriding, we will say that he is a sick man even though he may experience occasional recovery.

In short, the spiritual masters are occasionally overcome by conditions but this does not negate their mastery. In fact, even the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are occasionally overcome by conditions but in accordance with their rank. For example,

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* – the chief and leader of the Prophets – cried to and beseeched Allāh *taʿālā* before the Battle of Badr. This stemmed from a condition which overpowered him. It is related that angels also experience such overriding conditions although they do not have human emotions. A narration of *Tirmidhī* states that Jibrīl *ʿalayhis salām* stuffed mud into the mouth of Pharaoh. It should be borne in mind that when a man of *maqām* is overpowered by a condition, he does not step out of the bounds as opposed to a man of conditions. The latter sometimes steps out of the bounds, but a sin is not recorded against him because he was overcome by his condition.

Spiritual Ecstasy is Sometimes Experienced After Stability

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā never experienced such an intense and prolonged retraction after that. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he developed a stable and firm internal spiritual condition. However, as per the above explanation, how could he avoid certain temporary changes? After all, they are normal essentials of the spiritual path. Even after a seeker becomes a man of *maqām*, he is bound to experience certain conditions occasionally. Most of them do not manifest themselves, but you do get a few which come out into the open.

I heard of one incident from reliable sources about how Hadrat Wālā was indeed overcome by his condition. This happened just a few years ago in the musjid of the Khānqāh of Thānah Bhawan. Hadrat Wālā was delivering a talk and quoted the following couplets from *Mathnawī Sharīf* with full force and emotion:

> O enemies! The friends have sealed off all the roads.
> I am a lame buck while the hunter is a lion.
>
> What escape do I have apart from submission and acceptance of divine decree? After all, even a defeated warrior is at the mercy of the lion.

Hadrat Wālā just finished quoting the second couplet when he was overcome by spiritual ecstasy and a scream emanated unwittingly from him. He remained trembling for quite some time and caused the audience to tremble as well. It was absolutely clear from the topic on which he was speaking and from the prevailing situation that this condition was caused by

an overpowering fear. The return of this condition was like an affirmation of the following couplet:

> I am singing a worrisome tune once again, and igniting a fire among the nightingales.

What a powerful condition this must have been that it caused a mountain of stability like Hadrat Wālā to tremble in this way! Why should this not be the case? Even a man of *maqām* has a limit to patience and fortitude. When a powerful condition which is beyond this limit overpowers him, he becomes overpowered immediately. At the same time, he overpowers it soon thereafter. The condition is not able to continue for a long time nor can it be too intense. If such a powerful condition had to overpower a person who is not of *maqām*, he may well lose his life in the process. In short, such overpowering conditions do not negate stability. In fact, they themselves could be referred to as levels of stability.

> This madness which you are seeing together with this beauty can be tolerated. O well-wisher! Do not scold this impatient one.

Anyway, the above incident presented an overpowering condition which was exposed to those who were present. In addition to it, many other subtle conditions are continually experienced. They are strong and powerful in themselves, but because of the strong forbearance and stability of the person on whom they descend, they do not manifest themselves as overpowering conditions. These subtle spiritual conditions are certainly not concealed from a man of insight. The effects of fear [of Allāh *taʿālā*] manifest themselves very often on Hadrat Wālā, and any person with the slightest affinity with Sufism can perceive them easily. A few examples in this regard will be provided under the discussion on the wisdom behind retraction and fear. These examples will serve as proofs for what I am saying at present. Hadrat Wālā's elevated excellences and lofty conditions are so open and manifest that a man of insight, equity and moderation will never need such proofs. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī says:

> Proof of the sun is the sun itself. If you are searching for a proof, do not turn your face away from it.

However,

> You must divest your mind of rejecting the beloved
> so that you can get a fragrance from the rose garden
> of the beloved.

Difference Between a Man of Maqām And One of Spiritual Conditions

I now conclude this addendum with a very clear example which displays the difference in states between a man of *maqām* and one of spiritual conditions. This was related by Hadrat Wālā on one occasion. Hadrat Wālā was drawing hot water from the Khānqāh bathroom in order to perform ablution. Steam escaped from the utensil when he removed the lid. The fire was burning from beneath the utensil and its smoke also rose up. This caused discomfort to his eyes. He immediately said: "A man of *maqām* also experiences conditions, but they are very subtle like this steam, because they [conditions] are spiritual. On the other hand, the conditions of a man of conditions are from the self, this is why they have a burning nature like this smoke.

Returning to The Previous Topic

The severe tribulation which Hadrat Wālā had to go through which, according to the Sufis is known *haybah*, is the highest form of retraction which is experienced only by those on the highest level of spirituality. We provided details in this regard by the help of Allāh *taʿālā*. All praise is due to Him. A few Qur'ānic verses, Ahādīth and poems of the true lovers of Allāh *taʿālā* are now quoted to show that in most conditions, the retraction and tribulation which are experienced are from among the essentials of Sufism.

Qur'ānic verses

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِيْ كَبَدٍ

We certainly created man into toil.[1]

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوْعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ

We will most certainly test you through a little fear, hunger and loss in riches, lives and fruits.[2]

---

[1] Sūrah al-Balad, 90: 4.
[2] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 155.

Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* conveys the essence of the above verse as follows:

> O you brave man! Allāh *ta'ālā* casts pain, discomfort and calamity on our bodies.
>
> Fear, hunger, loss in wealth, loss in body – all these are sent to demonstrate the essence of one's life.

اَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ اَنْ يُّتْرَكُوْا اَنْ يَّقُوْلُوْا اٰمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُوْنَ

Do people think that they will be left alone by merely saying: "We believe," and that they will not be tested?[1]

اَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَاْتِكُمْ مَّثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ؕ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَاْسَآءُ وَالضَّرَّآءُ وَزُلْزِلُوْا حَتّٰى يَقُوْلَ الرَّسُوْلُ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهُ مَتٰى نَصْرُ اللهِ ؕ اَلَآ اِنَّ نَصْرَ اللهِ قَرِيْبٌ.

Do you think you will go into Paradise while you have not experienced the circumstances like those of the people who passed before you? Misfortune and hardship befell them and they were shaken to the extent that the Messenger and those who believed with him began saying: "When will the help of Allāh come?" Listen! The help of Allāh is near.[2]

اِذْ جَآؤُكُمْ مِّنْ فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ اَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ وَاِذْ زَاغَتِ الْاَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوْبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّوْنَ بِاللهِ الظَّنُوْنَا، هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَزُلْزِلُوْا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيْدًا.

When they came upon you from above and from below, when the eyes became distracted and the hearts came up to the throats, and you thought all manner of thoughts about Allāh. There and then the believers were tried and they were severely shaken.[3]

وَنَبْلُوْكُمْ بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً (في الجلالين كفقر وغنى، وسقم وصحة، وفي جامع البيان بالمصائب تارة وبالنعم أخرى).

We test you through evil and good by way of trial.[4] Jalālayn *states: Like poverty and affluence, illness and good health.* Jāmi' al-Bayān *states: With calamities sometimes and bounties at other times.*

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[1] Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 2.
[2] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 214.
[3] Sūrah al-Ahzāb, 33: 10-11.
[4] Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 35.

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها في حديث طويل قصة فترة الوحي، زاد البخاري حزن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما بلغنا حزنا غدا منه مرارا كي يتردى من رؤس سواهق الجبل، فكلما أوفي بذروة جبل لكي يلقي نفسه منه تبدي له جبرئيل فقال يا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، إنك رسول الله حقا، فيسكن كذالك جاشه وتقر نفسه.

In a lengthy Hadīth, ʿĀ'ishah radiyallāhu ʿanhā *describes the period when divine revelation had stopped coming to Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. *Al-Bukhārī adds: Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *became deeply worried and tried several times to throw himself from the tops of the mountain. Each time he climbed a peak in order to fling himself down from it, Jibrīl would appear and say: "O Muhammad! You are most certainly a Messenger of Allāh. This would settle his mind and provide solace to him.*

Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* describes the above condition in the following couplets:

> When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was troubled by the anxiety of separation, he tried to throw himself from a mountain.
>
> Jibrīl said to him: Do not do that. You have received the treasure [of prophet-hood] by Allāh's command.
>
> Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* restrained himself from throwing himself. The pain of separation began tormenting him again.
>
> He was overcome by grief and pain and tried to throw himself off a mountain again.
>
> Jibrīl appeared once again and said: Do not do this, you have received a unique kingdom.
>
> His condition remained in this way until the concealed was made clear to him and he acquired the reality from his Beloved [Allāh].
>
> He beats himself because of each difficulty. When he beats himself like this, it is the foundation for all difficulties.

> O you lazy fellow! You ought to sacrifice yourself for the task for which he sacrificed himself.
>
> A noble person sacrifices himself several times for it because dying in this path entails hundreds of lives.

عن سعد قال سئل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أي الناس أشد بلاء، قال الأنبياء ثم الأمثل فالأمثل، يبتلى الرجل على حسب دينه، فإن كان في دينه صلبا اشتد بلاءه.

Sa'd ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu 'anhu *said: Rasūlullāh* <u>s</u>allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam *was asked: "Which people experience the worst tribulations?" He replied: "The Prophets, then those who are closest to them followed by those who are closest to them. A person is tested according to the level of his religiosity. If he is firm in his religion, his tribulation is severe."*

Maulānā Rūmī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* said in this regard:

> The tribulations which were borne by the Prophets were as if they spread their heads on the seven heavens.

وإن كان في دينه رقة هون عليه، فما زال كذلك حتى يمشي على الأرض ما له ذنب. رواه الترمذي، وابن ماجه، والدارمي.

If he is lax in his religion, it is made easy for him. He remains like that until he walks on earth without any sin on him.[1]

Sayings of True Lovers of Allāh

The following are by Shīrāzī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*:

> The twist in your hair-lock has caused a disturbance in every circle. The sorcery of your eyes has caused sick people to be found lying around in every corner.
>
> In the beginning it feels easy to acquire love and intoxication. But I eventually burnt myself traversing these stations.
>
> O cup-bearer! Listen! Swirl the goblet and hold it firmly because love appears easy in the beginning but there are many difficulties in its path.

---

[1] Narrated by Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Dāramī.

> The pain of love is such that the more you try to treat it, the worse it becomes.
>
> The ocean of love is a shore-less ocean. There is nothing you can do apart from giving your life to it.
>
> Once you start casting lives in the chamber of calamities, you will continue casting. Once you start flinging the hearts with amber-like hair-locks, you will continue doing so.
>
> You need a lot of capital for a lover's shop. You will need a heart like fire and eyes like a flowing river.
>
> There is nothing apart from lightning in the quest for love. It will not be surprising if this quest burns an entire farm.
>
> When any bird falls in love with the grief of the heart, the effects of happiness will never be seen on the cheeks of its life.
>
> You will face dangers to your life on the path to the house of Laylā. The prerequisite for taking the first step to her house is that you will have to be Majnūn.
>
> As long as thousands of thorns do not sprout forth from the ground, you will not find a garden and flowers coming forth from any piece of ground.
>
> It is wrong to expect peace and comfort on the path to love. The heart which desires a bandage for the pain will find the heart forever wounded.
>
> There is no place on the alley of intoxication for the haughty ones and those who are fully occupied. This alley needs travellers who have forsaken the world. It does not need those who are not firm and those who have no grief.
>
> Whoever you see, you see him grief-stricken in your love. I have not come across any heart which has not fallen ill out of your love.

The following couplet is by Hadrat ʻIrāqī *rahimahullāh*:

> All the pains and tribulations in the world were brought together and named "love".

The following are by Nawāb Mustafā Khān Sāhib Sheftah *rahimahullāh*:

> It is the ember which melts the life and the lightning which burns the luminous face. Yes, do not think it is easy to live in love.
>
> There is no person in this desolateness who has not been disgraced. There is no nightingale in the garden which is not caught up in love.
>
> You are very relaxed and satisfied, yet you are desirous of [Allāh's] manifestation!? This lightning cannot be acquired by anyone except the one with a pining heart.
>
> It is not easy to reach the friend before love. First the soul will have to be separated from the body and then the body will have to be separated from the soul.

The following couplet is by Hadrat Shaykh ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangohī *rahimahullāh*:

> The truthful ones lost their lives out of remorse that the heavens placed the ground on their heads.

The following couplet is by Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*

> An old man was going around in the alleys and making this announcement: "Love is most unconcerned. You must be cautious."

The following couplet is written by Hadrat Jāmī *rahimahullāh*:

> The corner of peace is not suitable for love. The humiliation of the alley of ridicule is better for it.

Miscellaneous:

> We nurtured the enemy and killed the friend. No one is permitted to raise any objections against our decision.
>
> As long as a person is not tried and tested to the full, we do not include his name among the true friends [of Allāh *taʿālā*].
>
> This tribulation is a pearl from our treasures. We do not give our pearl to anyone.

The Wisdom Behind Retraction And Fear

As I had promised, I now present some of the wisdoms of this lofty condition of retraction and fear. It is presented to the seekers, especially those who are experiencing this tribulation. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā*.

There are three parts to this section. Inshā Allāh, the first part will contain the wisdoms which were clearly observed from Hadrat Wālā's collective conditions. The second section will contain quotations of wisdoms from Hadrat Wālā's writings. The third section will contain wisdoms found in the Qur'ān, Ahādīth and statements of people.

A Tribulation In Appearance, A Mercy In Reality

First Section

Hadrat Wālā's internal tribulation was an expression of Allāh's declaration: "It may well be that you dislike something while it is good for you." It was thus a tribulation in appearance but a fountain of Allāh's mercy in reality. In addition to embracing vast internal progress for Hadrat Wālā himself, it concealed countless general religious benefits for the seekers. At the time, Hadrat Wālā was extremely worried by this sudden tribulation and did not know what calamity he was caught up in. He did not know that life-giving waves were striking in this gloomy darkness, and that the grief and worry which were beating his heart from all sides were really harbingers for the descent of divine mercy. Detailed knowledge of the specific internal progress which he acquired from this tribulation cannot be fathomed by anyone. After all:

> There are such secrets between the lover and the beloved that even the angels who are appointed to record a person's deeds are not aware of them.
>
> Now who has the courage to ask the owner of the garden what the nightingale said, what the flowers heard, and what the morning breeze said?

Firmness in The Station of Servitude

However, all the people of the path know this much that the highest station in Sufism is the station of servitude. They also accept the fact that when a person remains firm and steadfast during such an intense and prolonged state of retraction – as

was the case with Hadrat Wālā – then the seeker becomes extremely firm and resolute in the station of servitude by the help of Allāh *taʿālā*. The reason for this is that after he witnesses the grand workings of the Real Doer [Allāh *taʿālā*] within his self, his own insignificance and absolute unimportance become totally clear to him. By virtue of observing his own incapability, he reaches perfect servitude which is really the last station of spiritual progress.

Bearing in mind that he had personally experienced the changes in the condition of his heart, when he is no longer in that state of fear, he still trembles at and fears Allāh's power and might, and is in awe of divine will and divine decree. Even when he perceives the most excellent internal conditions, he does not have even a whispering of pride and arrogance. Based on his previous experience, he considers this condition to be merely a gift from Allāh *taʿālā* at present, and has full conviction that he is under the control of Allāh *taʿālā* for the future as well. In short, consciousness of Allāh's might becomes his continuous condition, absolute respect and deference for Allāh *taʿālā* becomes its natural demand, and full surrender and total obliteration become the salient features of his life. Alternatively, we could say that complete servitude becomes his essential quality, and submission and resignation become second nature to him.

Any ordinary insightful person can gauge these pre-eminent qualities to the highest degree in Hadrat Wālā merely by observing his conditions, reading his books, and listening to his statements and instructions. They are as clear as the day; there is no need to explain them. After all, how can you explain something which is so clearly observed? And why should there even be a need to explain it!?

Considering Himself To Be Insignificant

Nevertheless, a few incidents are presented to serve as examples.

On countless occasions we heard Hadrat Wālā taking an oath and saying: "I neither consider myself better than any Muslim nor better than those Muslims whom people label as flagrant sinners and wicked at present. Based on what could happen in the future, I do not even consider myself to be better than the unbelievers. I never have any thoughts of attaining ranks in the

Hereafter because these will be attained by great people. If I merely get a place in the shoes of the inhabitants of Paradise, it will be a great mercy from Allāh *taʿālā*. I do not have the desire for anything more. This desire too which I have is not because I feel I am eligible for it, but because I cannot bear the punishment of the Hell-fire. When I scold and reprimand people for the sake of their rectification, I have the following example in my mind: A prince committed a crime and an ordinary sweeper or executioner is commanded by the king to lash the prince. When the executioner is lashing the prince, will he even think to himself for the slightest moment that he is superior to the prince?"

"In short, no matter how sinful a believer is, I never look down on him. Instead, I immediately think of this example: If a beautiful woman rubs soot on her face, the person who knows her will dislike the soot but will still consider the beautiful woman to be beautiful. He will think to himself: Once she washes her face with soap, it will appear like the moon once again. In other words, I only detest the action, not the doer of the action."

No Deed Is Worthy Of Consideration In Allāh's Court

On one occasion I quoted a statement of a virtuous associate of Hadrat Wālā to Hadrat Wālā. This associate had said: "In the Hereafter I will not be able to present any deed which was done sincerely." Hadrat Wālā was replying to a letter at the time. The moment he heard me quoting this statement, he stopped. Clear signs of shame and remorse appeared on his face, and he lowered his head in his overwhelming servitude. After remaining silent in this way for some time, he said in a tone filled with remorse: "Indeed, what worthy deed is there which can be presented in Allāh's court?"

Fearing Doubts Of Pride

He said on one occasion: "When I refuse to accept a gift, then although I refuse because of a valid reason, I become very afraid because when I ponder over it, I have some doubts of pride. This causes me intense fear. May Allāh *taʿālā* pardon me. It is extremely difficult to differentiate between independence and pride. The two are very similar. Sometimes we are deluded and what we consider to be independence is actually pride. A person can only be protected from this if Allāh

taʿālā protects him. Apart from this, all our words, actions, situations and conditions are full of dangers. No condition is devoid of danger. Nowadays I think a lot of this couplet which I had read at some time in my childhood:

> I am not saying You must accept my worship. All I am begging for is that You draw Your pen of forgiveness over my sins.

In fact, in the light of what Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "The deeds which we did when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was alive must be accepted. And if we are not taken to task for those which we did after his demise, that will be a great boon for us." We do not have any ambitions of reward. Let alone our sins, it will be a boon if Allāh *taʿālā* were to pardon us for the shortcomings in our acts of obedience because what we consider to be acts of obedience are not even worthy of being termed as such. For example, a person is waving a hand-fan or rendering some other service in a slapdash manner. He may feel very happy over the fact that he is rendering a service whereas it is a cause of severe discomfort. However, we do not stop him from rendering that service solely because we do not want to offend him. The same is with our acts of worship. A person should not think that he spent an entire hour in Allāh's remembrance because he does not know whether he will be taken to account for it or not. I say with regard to such acts of worship: It will be a real boon if we are not taken to task for them. The high ranks can be aspired for by those who enjoy high ranks. As for me, I beseech and beg Allāh *taʿālā* to save me from punishment and to give me just one place among the shoes of Paradise.[1]

A Reply To A Chief's Letter

A high-ranking relative of a respectable chief suddenly fell ill with severe pneumonia. All the other relatives became extremely worried because they did not have any hopes for his survival. The chief sent a telegram to Hadrat Wālā requesting him to pray for his relative's recovery. Hadrat Wālā prayed for him and, by Allāh's grace, contrary to expectations, he recovered completely. Even the doctors were left astounded. The chief wrote to Hadrat Wālā: "Allāh *taʿālā* accepted Hadrat's

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[1] *Husn al-ʿAzīz*, vol. 1, statement number 98.

prayer and saved us from a calamity. I sent Hadrat Wālā the telegram when I had become extremely terrified. Like the proverb: The destination of the judge is the musjid.[1]

He also wrote the same thing to me, i.e. The destination of the judge is the musjid. When we are afflicted by any difficulty, we burden Hadrat Wālā to pray for us. By Allāh's grace, we are always successful in this regard. Hadrat Wālā commented on his statement with genuine humility and in a very subtle way by writing to him: "Yes, but the musjid is without a roof. One can neither protect himself from the cold, sunlight nor the rain. However, our associates open their umbrellas and stand there. Yet, it is referred to as a musjid. That umbrella is your love and noble thoughts (by virtue of which Allāh *ta'ālā* showers His grace)."

Do Not Be Proud Over Any Condition

In the course of one of his conversations, Hadrat Wālā made a very emotional statement in a subdued tone. He said: "One can neither rely on one's knowledge, actions, conditions nor station. Nothing can be relied on. In fact, one cannot even rely on the most essential element, viz. the continuance of one's īmān. Divine decree and will are all tightly bound. We do not know what is destined for whom. Very often a person knows a particular action to be a sin and knows that it is within his control to abstain from it, but is still caught up in it and causes himself to be caught up in it by his own choice. Who is it who is pushing him forward? Furthermore, it is traditionally and rationally imperative not to believe in the concept of fatalism.

This is a very delicate issue and also a terrifying station. No matter how good a condition you may be experiencing, never be proud over it. No matter how bad a condition you see in another, never castigate him. You have no guarantee that your condition may become worse than his. How can we ever have pride over anything when our knowledge, deeds, conditions and station are all under Allāh's control?

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا، وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ

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[1] In other words, the musjid is the furthest place which the judge refers to at the hour of need.

Whatever of mercy Allāh opens up for the people, none can withhold it. And whatever He withholds, none can bestow apart from Him.[1]

Hadrat Wālā said in a subdued tone on one occasion: "Like a matchstick, all vile elements are found in the self. It is just the striking [of the matchstick] which is left. It remains safeguarded for as long as Allāh *taʿālā* saves it from striking. He did not save Pharaoh and Hāmān, so that element was ignited in them. A person can only be protected if Allāh *taʿālā* protects him. Maulānā Rūmi *rahimahullāh* says:

> The sole sickness of Satan was that he considered himself to be superior. This sickness is found in every creation.

When Hadrat Wālā speaks about the baseless beliefs of deviated sects, he spontaneously beseeches and begs Allāh *taʿālā* with genuine humility and says: "O Allāh! Save us from Your wrath. O Allāh! Save us from Your wrath." He adds: "When Allāh's wrath falls, even false things appear to be the truth, and baseless premises take on the form of truths and facts."

When Shaking Hands With People

A large crowd of people was waiting anxiously to shake hands with Hadrat Wālā after the last Jumuʿah salāh of the Ramadān of 1353 A.H. Instead of allowing them to shake hands with him the moment he gets up from his place, he stopped all of them. He said: "I will not shake hands with anyone until I proceed and sit near the pond." He did this because he feared he might fall down due to the large crowd and his old age. He proceeded towards the pond by having two persons on either side of him who were holding each of his hands. If, while walking, anyone came to shake hands with him, he would say: "Both my hands are restrained at the moment. If you want to shake hands with me, you should rather shake the hands of these two in whose hands are my hands. I will only shake hands after I sit near the pond." He then sat at the pond and continued shaking hands with the people for quite a long time. When he finished, he went to his sitting place and said: "By Allāh, I consider it a great honour that a worthless person like myself has so many

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[1] Sūrah Fātir, 35: 2.

Muslims who love him. At the same time, I dislike disorderliness. Had I not made this arrangement, people would have rushed from all sides and I could have fallen due to my old age. By making this arrangement, I was able to shake hands with everyone with total ease. I shook hands with them with the intention that there must certainly be at least one accepted and pardoned servant of Allāh *taʿālā* from among them. Allāh forbid, all of them could not have earned Allāh's wrath and all of them could not be the inmates of Hell. If just one person from them earned Allāh's mercy and he sees me burning in the Hell-fire, will he not feel mercy towards me? Will he not intercede on my behalf before Allāh *taʿālā* and have me removed from Hell?"

I Have No Merit

Hadrat Wālā said on countless occasions: "All the simple and beneficial ways of rectifying the self which Allāh *taʿālā* instils in my mind are solely through the blessings of the seekers; it is not my achievement. Allāh *taʿālā* willed for His servants to be rectified and for them to derive benefit. He is therefore taking this service from a worthless person like me. Anyone who has any pride over his knowledge and understanding must separate himself from the seekers and see how he is totally overturned. This is because Allāh *taʿālā* gave him this knowledge and understanding for the benefit of others."

"A mother cannot be proud over the fact that she breastfeeds her child. Rather, it was Allāh's will for the child to be reared. This is why He produced milk from flesh. The milk which gushes forth from the breasts is through the blessings of the infant's sucking action. If a mother stops breastfeeding her child, the milk will dry up. Similarly, if water is not drawn from a well, it will not get filled with new water. In short, if a shaykh stops conveying [his knowledge and understanding], he will stop receiving."

Neither Knowledge Nor Action

There was a scholar who was in search of a shaykh. Hadrat Wālā was displeased with him because he was self-opinionated. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "I am standing here in a musjid and assuring you that the day you pledge bayʿah to any of our elders and inform me about it, then inshā Allāh, whatever ill-feeling I have towards you will disappear immediately. I will

then consider you to be my friend, and myself to be your servant. But don't even think of having your objectives fulfilled here because I am totally unqualified to steer a knowledgeable person like you. If you wish, I can take an oath on this."[1]

Hadrat Wālā made a statement which is appropriate to the above condition. He said: "I neither possess knowledge, deeds nor any achievements. However, all praise is due to Allāh I have full conviction about my own emptiness. It is enough for me if Allāh *taʿālā* showers His grace on me solely on this."

Everything Is Achieved Through Allāh's Help

A student wrote to Hadrat Wālā asking him for a treatment for a severe psychological illness. Hadrat Wālā replied to his letter and, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the illness was completely uprooted. Someone said: "There are clear blessings in Hadrat Wālā's instructions." Hadrat Wālā said: "There is nothing in my instructions. The fact of the matter is that it is solely Allāh's help and support. Allāh *taʿālā* is the Real Doer, I am nothing. A tanner does not know how to crush stones for road construction. But an engineer places his hand on his stone-crusher and is able to crush the stones for his road. Neither is my knowledge nor my understanding influential in the matter of rectification. Allāh *taʿālā* merely delegated a task to me and He helps me to carry it out. It is not my achievement in the least."

Overwhelming Respect

Hadrat Wālā is forever overwhelmed by respect for Allāh *taʿālā* and keeps away from the slightest whispering of disrespect towards Him. If, in the course of a discussion, he has to quote any person's disrespectful statement, he will bring both his hands together and say with absolute submission and tribute: "O Allāh! I repent. O Allāh! I repent."

I Am Filled With Faults

A person saw a dream in which he was reprimanded: "You have vile thoughts about the pious elders. You must repent quickly from this." He also came to Hadrat Wālā, clasped his hands and said: "I seek pardon from Janāb as well." Hadrat Wālā

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[1] *Husn al-ʿAzīz*, vol. 1, statement number 92.

immediately held the man’s hands, separated them and said: “What are you doing? Why do you have to ask me to pardon you? Why are you including me in your dream? The dream made mention of pious elders. We certainly have to seek their pardon. I take an oath and say to you that I do not find any excellence within me – not with regard to knowledge, actions, statements and conditions. In fact, I am filled with nothing but defects. If someone were to speak ill of me, I can say with certainty that I do not even experience a whispering of not being eligible of the evil which he spoke about me. In fact, if someone were to praise me, I am astonished and think to myself: ‘What praiseworthy quality do I have which has caused him to think of me in this manner? He has certainly been deceived.’ It is rather Allāh’s quality of concealing which has concealed my faults. I am therefore not offended in the least when anyone speaks ill of me. If anyone speaks of just one good quality in me, I immediately think of ten faults which are in me.”

“Secondly, whatever bad things which you may have said about me was probably said out of ignorance. You are therefore excused. Thirdly, I have been making this supplication since a long time and I am refreshing it now: ‘O Allāh! Do not take any of Your creation to task because of me.’ I have pardoned with all my heart anyone who wronged me in the past or does it in the future. Allāh’s creation must therefore have no worry whatsoever about me. No one should harbour any doubts in this regard. You too must be rest assured. I have already pardoned all people from the depths of my heart. You are included in this general pardon. In fact, if you ever feel the need, you have full permission to come and tell me anything you wish.” Hadrat Wālā added: “If I do not pardon, or pardon and the other person is punished, what benefit will I achieve from it?”[1]

Hadrat Wālā said on another occasion: “If I do not pardon a person, can I ever bear to see him burning in the Hell-fire because of me?! I seek forgiveness in Allāh.” He also said: “No person should think that this pardon includes monetary rights or else people will carry away all my possessions. The pardon only applies to verbal abuses and vulgarities.”

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[1] *Husn al-ʿAzīz*, vol. 1, statement number 602.

Remorse Over Shortfalls In Actions

Hadrat Wālā said on several occasions: "I have a severe shortfall in actions but, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I am not heedless of my rectification. I am always concerned about rectifying such and such condition, and changing such and such situation. In short, I am not smug about any condition. Although I do not consider salvation to be confined to deeds but solely to Allāh's grace, it is the responsibility of man to carry out Allāh's orders and abstain from His prohibitions. This is why I am most remorseful over the shortfalls in my actions and am always worried about my rectification."

When Hadrat Wālā hears about the religiosity and piety of any of his associates and disciples, he says: "The father whose children surpass him in excellent qualities is most fortunate." He also says: "Allāh *taʿālā* has willed for me to have a good reputation, this is why He sends to me people who are good since before. In this way, I receive a good name for free." A poet says:

> Neither is the trap good nor the seeds which are placed in it. But coincidentally, a royal falcon got caught in my trap on each and every occasion.

Hadrat Wālā said: "No matter what discipline a person studied under me, he surpassed me in that discipline."

Although Hadrat Wālā was a matchless personality of his time as regards his internal and external excellences, he considers them to be totally insignificant even while accepting certain special excellences as a way of speaking about Allāh's favours on him. There is no sign whatsoever of self-conceit and pride in him. It is absolutely clear to those of insight. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

The Meaning Of Denying Any Excellence

After relating a few incidents and statements of Hadrat Wālā, I consider it appropriate to quote an article written by him on the subject of statements and conditions of servitude.

Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* also used to take an oath and say: "I do not possess any excellence." A disciple raised the following objection to this statement before Hadrat Wālā. He said: "It has to mean one of two things: (1) If this is a

true oath, the excellences of Maulānā will have to be negated. (2) If it is not a true oath, why did Maulānā take an oath on an untruth? What beliefs should we hold about him?"

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The Maulānā must be considered to be true in his oath and we must also believe that he possesses excellences because his denial is with regard to past excellences while our belief is with regard to his present excellences. There is therefore no contradiction."

I [the author] say: This is similar to a person climbing a lofty minaret with his gaze directed at the top. Even when he reaches the top, he will think to himself that he has not reached any considerable height because the sky seems to be just as high [as it was when he was looking at it from the bottom of the minaret]. Although he is right in thinking that he has not reached any considerable height in relation to the height of the sky, when observed from the ground we will say that he has reached a great height. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> The sky is very low in comparison to the Throne [of Allāh], but much higher than the sandy hills.

Since the manifestations of Allāh *ta'ālā* are limitless, no matter how high a seeker of His recognition reaches, he is still convinced that he is as he was on the first day of his spiritual journey. He is absolutely right in this conviction. As a saying goes:

ما عرفناك حق معرفتك

We have not recognized You as You ought to be recognized.

Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> O brother! This is an endless court. No matter on which level you reach, you are before Him.
>
> No one knows the reality. They are all passing on empty-handed.

I just remembered a statement of a Jhanjhānwī person with reference to Hadrat Wālā. He said: "He is progressing, this is the rank which is meant. When a person of such rank traverses the levels of spiritual progress and proceeds forward,

then each of the levels which he passed seems to be absolutely low and worthless in relation to the next anticipated level."

This is the basis of the above-quoted statements and incidents of Hadrat Wālā as regards servitude. Similar statements and incidents are found profusely in the lives of the spiritual masters. The same basis can be applied to them as well.

In short, the more the insight of a gnostic increases, the magnificence of Allāh *taʿālā* continues to be exposed to him day after day. At the same time, new points and ways of displaying servitude are continually realized by him. Consequently, no matter how perfect his acts of worship and obedience may be, he considers them to be worthless in relation to the rights of the magnificence of Allāh *taʿālā*. It is absolutely correct for him to think in this way because the right of Allāh's magnificence can never be fulfilled. This is why a gnostic is never content with any condition of his, never satisfied with the rectification of any of his levels, and he will take oaths to deny his excellences.

How Do Seekers Benefit From A Shaykh's Conditions?

This was a brief discussion of the special benefits acquired by Hadrat Wālā in the course of his condition of fear through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the general benefits for the seekers, these are obvious and glaring because a perfect guide can only be one who has had personal experience of all the ups and downs of the path, and has personally faced all its obstacles and pitfalls.

Hadrat Wālā says: "I have experienced the hardest of conditions. Consequently, I have such experience of spiritual conditions that no matter how confusing a seeker's condition may be or how critical his internal stress may be, I do not experience the slightest hesitation in treating him – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Furthermore, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, such plans and measures come to my mind, that if the seeker adopts them, he comes out of his condition very easily and quickly. This is especially so with regard to diagnosing the nature of whisperings and dangers, and prescribing a treatment for them. Allāh *taʿālā* has conferred me with such insight in this regard that very few people have it nowadays. And I do not say it out of pride."

This statement can be verified by not only one or two seekers, but countless without exaggeration. They are those whom – by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* – Hadrat Wālā removed from the hardest of obstacles in the path of Sufism very easily and quickly by adopting very concise words of wisdom and showing them the easiest of measures and procedures. He did this in the past and continues in this manner. The conditions of some of them can be learnt by studying *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. Some of them were so distressed that they were on the verge of committing suicide. But by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, a single letter from Hadrat Wālā would console them and they would desist from their intention.

A Chief Is Treated

There was a learned chief in Bareilly who was a student of Maulānā Muhammad Ahsan Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*. During his final illness, he was experiencing whisperings of having an evil death. He became very terrified and requested Hadrat Wālā to come. He sent this request through Munshī Akbar ʿAlī Sāhib Marhūm who was Hadrat Wālā's younger brother and was employed as a secretary at Bareilly Municipality. Hadrat Wālā feels extremely sorry for sick people and tries his utmost to fulfil their requests. So he travelled to Bareilly to visit the chief. The latter immediately poured out his heart and expressed his worries and concerns. Hadrat Wālā consoled him in such a manner that all his worries were removed and he became extremely happy. For as long as Hadrat Wālā remained in Bareilly, he insisted on sending elaborate foods to him daily although Hadrat Wāla was staying at his brother's house. The chief passed away recently in a very good and happy way through the teachings of Hadrat Wālā.

A Lawyer Is Treated

There was a Kānpūrī lawyer who was quite learned. While reading The Book of Fear in *Ihyā' al-ʿUlūm* in 1319 A.H., he was overwhelmed by intense fear of an evil death and had virtually lost all hope. He was on the verge of giving up salāh, fasting and everything else. Coincidentally, Hadrat Wālā had gone to Kānpūr to attend a function. The lawyer showed the sections which he had been reading. Hadrat Wālā relates: "He was so overwhelmed by fear that he could not even read the text clearly." Hadrat Wālā provided satisfactory answers to his

objections and consoled him totally. Later on, the same lawyer requested Hadrat Wālā to pen those answers. Hadrat Wālā fulfilled his request and they were eventually published as a booklet titled *Khātimah bi al-Khayr*.

These are the blessings of the fear which Hadrat Wālā had experienced in the past. His experience enabled him to provide complete guidance and assistance to those who were in distress. It is difficult to find an equal to him in this field.

I just remembered an example which Hadrat Wālā's senior wife had given. The reasons which caused Hadrat Wālā to be overcome by fear were explained to the reader previously. When his distress used to increase considerably, he would relate his worries and pains to his partner in life and his remover of worries, i.e. his senior wife. She used to reply to Hadrat Wālā's concerns with most appropriate and reassuring words, and console him in this way. Hadrat Wālā says: "I received a lot of comfort from her replies."

I [the author] say: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā acquired the blessing of coinciding with the Sunnah in this matter as well. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was initially terrified by divine revelation, Hadrat Khadījah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* had comforted and reassured him. Even after Hadrat Wālā recovered from his fear, his senior wife used to periodically console him by relating the following example to him: A person has to go to a certain place and the road goes through a garden. But there is a bush of thorny trees and obstacles parallel to it. Incidentally, he starts walking through the thorny bush and his entire body gets covered with blood because of the constant pricking of the thorns. He had to suffer a lot of pain in the process. However, he continued traversing the path and as he proceeded, he eventually came back onto the beautiful garden path. The man certainly bore hardships but he was not prevented from covering his journey. A great benefit of this experience was that he will now be able to steer and guide others in a proper manner. In other words, if a seeker falls into a similar worry, he will be able to remove him from it very easily.

Another point which becomes clear from this example is that although the person has to bear severe hardships when he is overwhelmed by fear, it does not affect his actual journey.

In short, this tribulation was an immense source of mercy for Hadrat Wālā himself and for those seeking guidance. By the help of Allāh, we now come to the end of the first section of the wisdoms behind the condition of retraction and fear. I commence the next section in the name of Allāh. It contains wisdoms of retraction and fear from Hadrat Wālā's writings. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Second Section

This section contains wisdoms of retraction and fear from the writings of Hadrat Wālā.

1. A seeker wrote a lengthy letter to Hadrat Wālā in which he described his retraction and whisperings. Hadrat Wālā writes towards the end of his booklet *al-Ibtilā' li Ahl al-Istifā'*:

I now conclude this quick article by listing some benefits and wisdoms of whisperings, and some types of retraction and inclination towards disobedience which are experienced by a seeker. These whisperings contain certain subtle divine blessings which, when the person in trouble sees them, he will say the following spontaneously and receive consolation:

> A person committing a sin should never become distressed because Allāh's mercies are also concealed in it.

The benefits and wisdoms are:

(a) The person is never self-conceited because he considers himself to be in a terrible condition.

(b) He is always trembling, he is not proud about his knowledge and actions. He realizes that his knowledge, actions and condition are insignificant because he has seen them for what they really are.

(c) Once he experiences such a condition, he develops the strength to combat Satan. He does not fear him and thinks to himself that Satan cannot do anything more. Had he not experienced this condition, he would have not been strong enough and would have feared every harmful company.

(d) If he had to suddenly experience this condition at the time of death, Allāh *ta'ālā* alone knows how distressed he would become and with what thoughts he would die.

But once this obstacle passes, he gets the strength to bear it. If he experiences it again at the time of death, he will not get stressed and will not have any bad thoughts about Allāh *taʿālā*. He will give his life peacefully and out of love for Allāh *taʿālā*.

(e) Such a person becomes an expert and it becomes easy for him to steer and guide others.

(f) He witnesses Allāh's mercy over him all the time and feels that a worthless person like himself is receiving such excellent bounties.

(g) He literally sees the meaning of this Hadīth: "A person will not be forgiven by virtue of his deeds but by virtue of Allāh's mercy."

There are other benefits and wisdoms as well. I had said with regard to this collection that it is a harbinger to a praiseworthy condition.[1]

2. A student who was overwhelmed by fear wrote a long letter to Hadrat Wālā. The essence of it was: "I find the condition of unbelief in my condition and emotions. Although there is no change in my belief, I feel as if my actions and deeds are those of unbelief." Hadrat Wālā wrote the following reply:

Congratulations to you. This condition is known as fear. It is a lofty condition which was experienced by the senior Sahābah as well. The *Sahīh Bukhārī* makes reference to seventy Sahābah who feared hypocrisy over themselves. Allāh willing, this condition will soon be changed into affinity. I myself experienced such a condition and acquired thousands of benefits from it. Some of the benefits are: self-conceit disappears, you witness Allāh's power, you realize your own incapability, and so on.[2]

3. Hadrat Wālā writes a reply to a lengthy letter of another person who was experiencing retraction: "I read your entire letter, there is nothing to worry about. This condition is known as retraction and there are several causes of it. One of the causes is when a person does more than what he can bear.

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[1] Quoted from the introduction of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.
[2] *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.

This was the cause of your retraction. It is not a bad condition, rather a praiseworthy and beneficial one. In fact, the spiritual masters consider it to be higher than the condition of expansion because it is more able to treat blameworthy traits. Anyway, it is neither untreatable nor – Allāh forbid – a sign of deprivation. Almost all Sufis experience this condition, obtain salvation from it, and then progress in the path. One sign of its praiseworthiness has been written by yourself, viz. love of the shaykh. A person who is driven away is deprived of this bounty. In short, you must take full comfort [from what I said], start engaging in dhikr a little at a time, and do not increase it on your own. Inform me periodically of your practices and act according to my instructions. Allāh willing, you will progress daily."[1]

4. Hadrat Wālā writes to a person experiencing retraction: Allāh *taʿālā* is all merciful and all-wise. The enthusiasm, yearning and ache which you consider to be perfection is not perfection. The dryness and whisperings which you consider to be harmful are not harmful. If you were to acquire those conditions, they would have resulted in self-conceit because you consider them to be great things. Allāh *taʿālā* has really saved you from self-conceit. This in itself is a favour from Him. It is obligatory to be grateful for it, and not to complain.

> The Being who does not make you wealthy knows more about your wellbeing than your own self.

The above includes spiritual wealth. If the thing which you consider to be a loss was not found in you, you would not have developed this humility which is a great bounty. It is obligatory to be thankful for it. Since there is a possibility of ingratitude in this regard, you must understand its reality so that you can give thanks for it. It seems you have divested your mind of the theme which is discussed in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. Remember this general principle: You must not act against Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in actions which are within your choice. Thereafter, no matter what conditions you experience – since they are not of your choice – you must not bother in the least about them. Continue doing what you have to; you are not deprived. You yourself will establish the truth of

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[1] Ibid.

this at some time in the future. For the time being, accept what I am saying.[1]

5. Hadrat Wālā writes to another person experiencing retraction: Congratulations to you, congratulations to you. This is that condition which is my heartfelt desire to be experienced by my associates provided it is accompanied with insight and fortitude. Its benefits are countless. For example, the roots of self-conceit and pride are chopped off, a person is constantly conscious of being under the absolute control of Allāh *taʿālā*, the removal of hesitation after realizing that Satanic influences have ended. This is the real objective of the Sharīʿah. If a person experiences this condition at the time of his death, he will naturally become agitated and Allāh alone knows what he will think while he is agitated. When he experiences this condition while he is alive and fully aware [i.e. not on his death bed], he will not be affected by it if he experiences at the time of death. There are many other benefits of this condition. The essence of all is obliteration of one's self. The expansion which is experienced after it is also unparalleled. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for having enabled me to witness the benefits of this condition. This is why I consider it to be an intrinsic element for the realization of one's objective, and also hope that my friends and associates experience it. I repeat my congratulations to you.[2]

The reader can gauge the many benefits which Hadrat Wālā derived from this condition. Look at how essential he considers it for the seekers.

6. Another person wrote to Hadrat Wālā about his distressful condition. He went to the extent of begging Hadrat Wālā to rescue him from a dangerous whirlpool and convey him to the shores of consolation or else he can see no alternative but to take away his own life.

Hadrat Wālā's reply: This condition is known as retraction and its benefits are more than the condition of expansion. Although the benefits will not be realized while you are in the midst of retraction, you will learn most of them later on. Even if you do not come to know of them, the objective will be realized.

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[1] *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.
[2] Ibid.

Knowledge of the realization of the objective is not necessary. The conditions which you are experiencing at present are the effects of real humility and servitude. There is a strong possibility of it resulting in acquiring the treasure of proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

أنا عند المنكسرة قلوبهم

I [Allāh] am with the broken-hearted.

Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> The path does not entail keeping one's intellect and temperament energetic. Grace from the Master is not received without servitude.

You must never feel distressed. Engage in as much dhikr as you can even if it means having to impose on yourself slightly and even if you do not feel like it. You may decrease some of the dhikr which you consider to be over-burdensome, but engage in a lot of seeking forgiveness. Continue informing me once or twice a week for as long as this condition remains. Allāh willing, it will be removed very quickly. This condition is experienced by all. In fact, I am happy that you are experiencing it because it is a sign that you are traversing the path. These are all obstacles along the path.[1]

7. Hadrat Wālā replies to another similar lengthy letter: These are natural changes and changes of the self; not spiritual and of the heart. So instead of being harmful, they are beneficial. Self-conceit is treated through these changes, the reality of servitude is witnessed, and self-obliteration is clearly seen. This is really a type of retraction which has the following wisdoms: A person becomes regular with optional works, it is a place of test – if you pass it, you will be eligible for very high marks. Ponder over all this carefully and read it several times. I too am praying for your wellness.

Note: There are many other letters of this nature but I am sufficing with these seven out of fear that this section will get too long.

After reading the above letters, the reader must have learnt some of the wisdoms behind the condition of fear and, more

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[1] *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.

importantly, realized that if Hadrat Wālā had not experienced this condition himself, he would never have been able to console and provide solace to other with such conviction, confidence, strength and insight. This in itself is a great wisdom behind experiencing this condition.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, we completed relating the wisdoms behind the condition of fear from the writings of Hadrat Wālā. I now quote a special wisdom which emanated as a statement from the blessed mouth of Hadrat Wālā, and conclude this second section with it. He said:

"A seeker becomes distressed when he looks around and finds that the path is closed to him from all sides. Whereas the underlying reason behind it is that Allāh *taʿālā* wants him to lose hope from all sides and to turn to Him alone. Sealing off this door is not meant to separate himself from Allāh *taʿālā*. Rather, Allāh *taʿālā* wants to rescue him from Satan and take him under His refuge. This is similar to a mother confining her child in the house and locking it from all sides because there is a bear outside. On the other hand, the child becomes distressed, annoyed and very upset, and feels that a terrible injustice has been committed against him. This poor child does not know that it is not his mother's purpose to keep him restricted. She actually wants to protect him from the bear which is walking around outside and to bring him under her refuge."

I [the author] say: When the path is closed off to the seeker from all sides, it means that no matter how he tries to repulse the baseless whisperings, they are not repulsed. Instead, the more he tries to repulse them, the more they inundate him and the more powerful they become. When Allāh *taʿālā* takes him under His protection, it means that when all his efforts to repulse them failed – and in fact, were painful – he is forced to give them up and is compelled to turn to Allāh *taʿālā*. When he does this, he perceives immediate peace. After this one experience, instead of trying to repulse them, he tries to maintain and perpetuate Allāh's focus and attention on him. He continues his efforts in this regard until he is successful with Allāh's help, and if he does not completely uproot the whisperings, he certainly weakens them. His pain is then removed.

Hadrat Wālā provides an easier explanation to the above. He says: "Allāh *taʿālā* puts the seeker through this constricted pass so that he may be protected against the internal destroyers of self-conceit and pride. Had he not been treated in this manner, he would have become trapped in the web of evils of the self and destroyed himself in the process."

Third Section

Verses, Ahādīth and statements of the spiritual masters explaining the wisdoms behind the condition of retraction and fear.

Qur'ānic verses

عَسٰى اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْئًا وَّهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

It may well be that you dislike something while it may be better for you.[1]

وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا

So that Allāh may purify and cleanse the believers…[2]

اَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِيْنَ

Do you think you will enter Paradise when Allāh has not yet distinguished those who are fighters among you and not yet distinguished the steadfast?[3]

وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ

Allāh had wanted to test whatever is within you and to cleanse that which is in your hearts.[4]

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِيْنَ

We had tested those who were before them. Allāh shall certainly know those who are truthful and He shall certainly know those who are liars.[5]

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 216.
[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 140.
[3] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 142.
[4] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 154.
[5] Sūrah al-ʿAnkabūt, 29: 3.

The following couplets apply to the above verses:

> Anyone who makes claims to love has to endure thousands of hardships.
>
> If he is true in his claims, he bears the hardships. If he is a liar, he flees from them.

Ash-Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* said:

It is good when the scale of experience comes in-between so that the liar can be disgraced.

The following couplets also apply to the above verses:

> Do not shift away from the path merely by looking at a person's appearance. The essence of a man is identified by his patience and forbearance.
>
> If he is not true, he will not bear hardships. If he is fundamentally true, he will be patient.

Ahādīth

يبتلى الرجل على حسب دينه، فإن كان في دينه صلبا اشتد بلاءه. وإن كان في دينه رقة هون عليه، فما زال كذلك حتى يمشي على الأرض ما له ذنب. رواه الترمذي، وابن ماجه، والدارمي.

A person is tested according to the level of his religiosity. If he is firm in his religion, his tribulation is severe. If he is lax in his religion, it is made easy for him. He remains like that until he walks on earth without any sin on him.[1]

Statements of The Spiritual Masters

Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> I am crying because He loves crying and grief the most.
>
> I am enamoured by my ache and pain solely and exclusively for the pleasure of my Master.
>
> I make the soil of grief the antimony for my eyes so that the rivers of both eyes may be filled with pearls.
>
> When the creation sheds tears for Him, they are pearls; but the creation considers them to be tears.

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[1] Narrated by Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Dāramī.

More trials and tribulations befall His own because they are with the Beloved.

A child trembles with fear from the lancet of the cupper while the affectionate mother is happy with this grief.

As long as the child of the sweet-maker does not cry, the ocean of his generosity does not gush forth.

As long as the clouds do not cry, the orchard will never smile. As long as the infant does not cry, the milk will not gush forth.

Water always flows towards a low lying region. Where there is difficulty, that is where an answer is needed.

Medicine moves towards the place of the hurt. Cure goes to the place of pain.

O traveller! When you experience any restriction, that is where the good for you lies. So do not feel despondent.

If the season were to remain glittering all the time, the heat of the sun would have remained in the orchard.

If He shows you a stern countenance, He is also most merciful. While the heat comes smiling, it burns as well.

When hardship befalls you, consider it to be relief. Remain happy and do not frown.

The joy of happiness is the fruit of the orchard of grief. This joy is a wound, and that grief is its bandage.

Grief is like a mirror for a hardworking person because he sees its opposite in it.

After displaying the opposite of hardship, it shows another opposite, viz. prosperity and joyous living.

Consider these two qualities to be like your hand with its fingers extended. The closed fist of hardship is always followed by relief.

The hand can neither remain closed all the time nor open all the time. It has to experience either of the two.

These are two qualities which are supervised by the worker and the one who strives. Like the two wings of a bird, these two conditions are essential for him.

The hardships of winter and autumn bring splendour to the garden and are the lifeblood of spring.

So that the ground which conceals gemstones and pearls may bring out their colour.

So that the fire of fear and hope, and what is concealed by His might and affection may be exposed.

The spring seasons are the kindnesses and affections of Allāh. The autumn seasons are His threats and warnings.

The heart of a mujāhid is therefore sometimes open, and sometimes experiences the restriction of hardship and the pain of grief.

The soil and water of our bodies are harmful and destructive to our souls.

A servant who experiences the discomfort of hardship begs at the court of Allāh *taʿālā*, and presents countless complaints about his pain.

Allāh *taʿālā* says: Without this pain and discomfort…

This is why the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* have to bear the most hardships and calamities from all the creation.

When the skin is cleansed with medicine, it becomes nice like the leather of animals.

Man too is like that skin. He has become filthy and heavy because of those sins.

Give him a lot of bitter and sharp medicines so that he becomes pure, clean and beautiful.

If you do not understand all this O you who are deluded, then be pleased over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* imposes hardship on you without your choice.

Because when a friend puts you through a test, it is for your purification. His knowledge is superior to all your planning.

When he sees himself purified, the test seems very sweet. When he recovers from his illness, the medicine appears tasty.

I am astonished at the one who wants purification but screams out when he experiences discomfort at the time when he is being purified.

Do not grieve if any calamity befalls you. Do not worry when you suffer any loss.

Because it repulses calamity and prevents loss.

□

Listen to this example, recognize your own worth and – O young man – do not turn away from calamities.

Every time it heats up, it comes out and makes a big noise.

The cook turns the ladle constantly so that the food becomes hot properly and is roasted thoroughly.

I am not heating you because I dislike you, but so that your taste and flavour may come out to the full.

Submit to the hardship and relax so that I may cut you. You should therefore present to me a neck like that of H̲ad̲rat Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām*.

O chickpea! Suffer in this tribulation so that your self does not remain.

I am saying these bitter things to you so that I may cleanse you through them.

The one who does not exercise patience during a calamity is not accepted in the high court.

□

> May my life be sacrificed for you because you are my life and also the beloved of my life. The one who becomes the dust at your threshold has attained salvation from worry.
>
> I will experience a weak and terrible life when I am killed by your sword of grief.
>
>
>
> During the period when we were caught up by the tribulation of your gaze, we became fearless of the tribulations of the entire world during that same period.
>
> Previously I did not know a single letter from the tablet of my existence. I became literate after coming to your school of grief.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the three sections related to the wisdom behind the conditions of retraction and fear are now concluded. As we had promised previously, we will now describe the procedures for the removal of intense and prolonged fears. This subject is given the title: Treatment for retraction and fear. Allāh willing, if this procedure is followed, a major portion of this condition will be cured. In fact, the imaginary danger will be removed automatically. The total treatment for it follows. This treatment is derived from the Hadīth which encourages certain forms of dhikr or dhikr in general during such times. There are other treatments prescribed by the spiritual masters – e.g. visualizing one's shaykh, the dhikr of pās anfās, visualizing the letters of Allāh's name, etc. – these too are subsidiaries of the main treatment. If a person becomes distressed by his fears and this results in weakness of his heart, palpitations, physical weakness or any other illness; then together with the mentioned-treatment, it will be necessary for him to resort to fortifying foods, [lawful] activities which bring joy to the heart, and temporary medications for his illness. This treatment has been presented here because some seekers experience this tribulation which results in internal and external setbacks for them. They must not disvalue this treatment merely because it appears so simple and short. They can test it out and observe its effectiveness.

ان الله تجاوز لأمتي عما حدث به أنفسها

Allāh taʿālā *overlooked the evil thoughts of my followers as long as they do not utter them or do not put them into action.*

ʿAzīzī said that another narration has the words: "The whisperings which are in their chests." Khafī said that there are five levels of thoughts: (1) hājis, (2) khāṯir, (3) h̲adīth an-nafs, (4) humm, (5) ʿazm.

When a thought occurs in the heart and the self does not respond to it in any way, it is known as a hājis. If the person gets the inspiration to repulse it at the very beginning, he will not have to worry about the other levels. But if the thought hovers around in the self, comes and goes, but the self has not decided on any particular course of action, then it is known as a khāṯir. If the self has decided equally on carrying out or not carrying the thought, and does not give preference to one over the other, it is known as h̲adīth an-nafs.

There is neither any punishment, in the case of evil, nor any reward, in the case of good, in these three levels. Once the person carries out the action, he will either be punished or rewarded for it. But there is neither punishment nor reward for hājis, khāṯir and h̲adīth an-nafs (as opined by some scholars).

Once the self has an inclination towards carrying out or not carrying out an act, but its preference is not strong, then it is known as a humm; and there is reward for it if it is for good, and punishment if it is for evil. If there is a strong inclination towards the act to the extent that it becomes a firm determination wherein he has no control of desisting, then this is known as an ʿazm. Here too there is reward if it is for good, and punishment if it is for evil.

I say that the word "whispering" can be applied to all three levels, viz. hājis, khāṯir and h̲adīth an-nafs. A person is not taken to task for all three types of whisperings. The ruling of pardon is not different in the first two levels. The absence of accountability for h̲adīth an-nafs is proven from the above-quoted H̲adīth. The absence of accountability for the first two [hājis and khāṯir] is more because if h̲adīth an-nafs is pardoned, the preceding two levels (which are lower and less serious) are more likely to be pardoned. If you have a misgiving over the point that based on the H̲adīth, the ruling of pardon is

based on the technical meaning of hadīth an-nafs then what is the proof for it? This misgiving can be repelled as follows: hadīth an-nafs must be understood in the literal meaning unless there is a clear Sharʿī definition to the contrary. When there is no Sharʿī definition to the contrary, then the literary meaning is applied. Hence, the meaning of hadīth an-nafs will be the same as explained above.

The reason why a person is not taken to task for a hājis is that it is not his action. He merely experienced something over which he neither has any power nor control. As for khātir which comes after it, although the person is able to repulse it by removing the hājis the moment it comes to him (e.g. by occupying himself in something else), since khātir is lower than hadīth an-nafs – and the latter is pardoned according to the Hadīth – the khātir is more deserving to be pardoned. This explanation solves a major objection.

The objection is: The general principles of the Sharīʿah and rational rules demand that a person be taken to task for actions which are within his choice, and not be taken to task for those which are not within his choice. (This is the prelude, and the objection follows): It is a peculiar trait of the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* not to be taken to task for whisperings. If this is with regard to the unintentional actions related to these levels (in the sense that they are not taken to task for them while other nations are taken to task), then this would mean that the past nations are taken to task for unintentional actions – and this contradicts the principles of the Sharīʿah as is obvious from the verse in which Allāh *taʿālā* says: "Allāh does not impose on a person more than what he can bear." If this is with regard to actions which are within a person's choice, then what difference is there between an intentional and an unintentional act so as to necessitate punishment for an ʿazm and no punishment for hadīth an-nafs although both are within one's choice?

The solution is found in the fact that the peculiarity [of the followers of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] is as regards actions which are within their choice. And the difference between khātir and hadīth an-nafs, and ʿazm is that although the repulsing of khātir and hadīth an-nafs is within a person's choice, there is a need for a will and an intent, and most people forget this. In most cases, hājis (in this state of

forgetfulness) is unintentionally drawn towards khāṯir and ẖadīth an-nafs. Thus, punishment for khāṯir and ẖadīth an-nafs does not contradict the general principles of the Sharīʿah (because they are within one's choice in the sense that repulsing them was within his choice. When he did not repulse them, their existence became within one's choice. It is on this basis that a community being accountable for it was not against the principles of the Sharīʿah). But Allāh's mercy conferred this speciality to the Muslims by pardoning them this level, as was the case with past nations when it came to severe and difficult injunctions. These were lightened for the Muslim community. This level is therefore within one's choice, but there was severity in it because it was a type of fetter and an imposition. As for ʿazm, a hājis does not lead to it. Rather, it develops from an independent will and intent.

This is the difference between ʿazm and ẖadīth an-nafs. The basis of pardon was the proclivity which comes from forgetfulness. To be taken to task for the basis is an ʿazm in itself. Since this is the case, if the sin was committed by ẖadīth an-nafs through a separate ʿazm – even though the ʿazm may not be a sin, e.g. getting enjoyment from intentionally fantasizing about a woman – then one will obviously be taken to task for it. According to me, taking such enjoyment will be included in the general sense of this H̱adīth: "The self also commits adultery. Its adultery is that it hopes and desires." Another narration states: "The heart has an inclination and hopes (obviously, taking enjoyment is not possible without desire and inclination. Thus, this taking of enjoyment is also considered to be adultery). Reflecting over this H̱adīth is a great cure for whisperings. The Sufi masters resort to this treatment (this is why this H̱adīth was quoted in this booklet). The discussion of some seniors (such as Imām Ghazzālī *raẖimahullāh*) on this theme is slightly different, but the essential objective does not change (i.e. a person is not taken to task for what is not within his control and taken to task if it is within his control, irrespective of whether it is out of his control in reality or as a rule).

Treatment For Retraction And Fear

The previous discussion on the wisdom behind the conditions of retraction and fear was divided into three sections. Coincidentally, the present discussion also contains three

sections. This treatment is like a prescription which contains three parts as detailed below:

First section

To study the following books which are written by Hadrat Wālā and also the previous discussion on the wisdom behind the conditions of retraction and fear.

1. *Khātimah bi al-Khayr.*
2. *al-Ibtilā' li Ahl al-Istifā'.*[1]
3. *Khayr al-Akhbār fī Khabar al-Ikhtiyār* which is published towards the end of the book, *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah.*
4. *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter seven.

Second section

To study certain themes which are quoted below. These have been written by Hadrat Wālā and are divided into two sections, one containing his writings and the other his statements.

Writings

Quoted from Khātimah bi al-Khayr

1. This is a treatment for a harmful illness. A person is not taken to task for a whispering of fear, as explained previously. However, when it overcomes and overwhelms a person, it causes a lot of stress. Intense worry and pain envelope the heart. Since these illnesses are not illnesses of the Sharīʿah, it is not necessary to treat them. But they are chronic natural illnesses. A simple, effective and short remedy is explained here. A fear is essentially the unwitting turning of the self towards something bad. It is rationally proven, and the wise sages and scholars also accept the fact that when the self is focused on a particular thing, it cannot focus on something else at the same time. When any evil thought comes to your heart, do not try to repulse it. Do not delve into it nor on its causes because this would result in becoming even more engrossed in it. Instead, you should immediately focus your thoughts towards a righteous act. In this way, the evil thought

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[1] This booklet had been published on its own but is rarely found today. However, it has become a part of the introduction to *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. One may refer to it there.

will be repulsed automatically. If the thought returns, repel it in the same way.

A Treatment For Overwhelming Fear

2. A seeker was overcome by extreme fear which also resulted in physical weakness. He wrote: "I fear I will melt like ice and come to an end in this way." [Hadrat Wālā] wrote to him: Congratulations on your state of fear and worry. This is from among the lofty conditions. If you end in this way it will be the greatest form of martyrdom. However, the Sunnah demands that you make balance and moderation your fundamental basis for as long as your knowledge and strength can support you. Be conscious of affinity with fear, hope for mercy with worry and evil thoughts about one's self, continuity with obliteration, existence with non-existence, and observation of bounties with excessive humility. You must pay particular attention to this so that you can set right the final hours of others before you come to an end. A person who is firm in his attachment to Allāh *taʿālā* is less terrified by the above mentioned conditions. In most cases, they increase and intensify when a person thinks about them. Thinking about them is considered harmful in this path. This is the meaning which is derived from the following Hadīth:

سددوا وقاربوا واستقيموا ولن تحصوا ومن شاق شاق الله عليه

You should remain moderate, do as much as you possibly can and be steadfast. You will never be able to do everything. Whoever imposes difficulty on his self, Allāh will make it difficult for him.

When you experience excessive fears and evil thoughts about yourself then think that we are defective and sinners in every condition. Just as the true servants of Allāh *taʿālā* will receive salvation, the same will apply to those who repent. If we do not get the most prominent seat, we will at least get a place in the back where the shoes are placed. If we do not get the first prize, we can at least hope for salvation after being beaten. After understanding this, you must engage in excessive repetition of *Allāhummaghfirlī* (O Allāh forgive me). Allāh willing, your mind

will come right. If your retraction is not overpowered even after this, you must come here immediately after Ramadān.[1]

A note from the author: Glory to Allāh! Look at with what insight, power, attention and affection he explained the procedure to this person. And in the case where the person's retraction is not cured, look at with what determination and confidence Hadrat Wālā asked him to come to him for treatment. All these are the blessings of Hadrat Wālā himself experiencing overwhelming fear in the past. Therefore, whatever he says in such situations, he says with absolute confidence and based on personal experience. This is the very reason why Hadrat Wālā has so much of mercy towards those who are going through such tribulations and steers them with limitless affection.

Fearing An Evil End

3. Another seeker had written a lengthy letter. The gist of it is: Sometimes I experience the joy and happiness of īmān in my heart. At other times, I think about my evil existence and am overcome by a fear of an evil death. [Hadrat Wālā] wrote to him: The sum of your condition is retraction and expansion. Both conditions are very lofty and both increase one's proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*. You must therefore consider both to be bounties of Allāh *taʿālā* and be grateful to Him. When you are overcome by retraction, you must study *Iksīr Hidāyat (Tarjumah Kīmiyā-e-Saʿādat*) or the chapter on hope for Allāh's mercy from the book *Thalāthīn (Tarjumah Arbaʿīn*). You must study these repeatedly. I am also praying for you.[2]

A Treatment For Worry Which Is Caused By Retraction

4. A seeker was suffering from intense worry because of the condition of retraction. [Hadrat Wālā] wrote to him: Your condition is quite good. There are different ways of worship. Reflection is a form of worship. Dhikr without counting the number of repetitions is also a form of worship. Considering yourself to be despicable and ignoble is also a form of worship. In short, the objective is acquired in every condition. Yes, there are two conditions which are reprehensible; sinning and heedlessness. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, these are not in you.

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[1] *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.
[2] Ibid.

As for your overwhelming enthusiasm, this is a temporary condition and its absence is neither harmful to the seeker nor can it remain exactly as it is forever. The obstacles which you suspect are mere assertions and nothing else. You must remain satisfied with what I have written and follow it without asking for any proof, and continue with your tasks with ease and comfort. The heart is certainly weakened by worry and this can be harmful. But you are neither ill nor do you need any treatment. However, because you are not conversant with this field, you do not know about your own health. This too is not harmful.[1]

Letters To Various Seekers Suffering From Retraction

5. Several people who were suffering from retraction wrote to Hadrat Wālā. His replies are quoted below. They include the causes, diagnosis and treatments.

(a) This is known as retraction. You must not pay any attention to it. Remain occupied in your tasks and turn to excessive seeking of forgiveness. The benefits of this are more than expansion. Patience, teaching, acceptance and entrustment are from among its etiquette.

(b) This condition which you described is known as retraction. There are several reasons for it and the treatment for it is also various. If you have not committed any sin and did not intermingle with outsiders, then the reason for it is that you are being put through a test. Resort to reliance on Allāh *taʿālā* and patience, and engage in seeking forgiveness. Study my *Mawāʿiz* and *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. Allāh's mercy will be showered on you.

(c) This is known as retraction. Sometimes it is caused by natural medical changes in the body, sometimes by sinning, and sometimes it is a test. When the cause cannot be identified, all the treatments have to be brought together. In other words, have yourself checked by a doctor in order to regain a balance in your temperament and remain focussed in your tasks without hesitation.[2]

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[1] *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.
[2] *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.

Be Patient

6. Hadrat Wālā writes to a person who was experiencing retraction:

> O Hāfiz! Be patient over the hardships which are encountered over time. There will certainly come a time when you will realize your objective.

In this context, patience means that you must continue doing all the tasks which are within your control and choice. Do not become agitated if you experience any matter which is not within your control, and do not resort to any procedures to overcome it. Hand it over to Allāh *taʿālā* and remain silent.[1]

7. Hadrat Wālā described certain procedures which should be followed in order to get rid of certain fears. He wrote these to some of those who were suffering from these fears.

(a) Whisperings should not cause any worry. Worry weakens the heart and results in a double worry. The only thing to do in such a situation is to disregard the whisperings totally and not to pay any attention to them. In fact, it will be better to be happy over them. This strengthens the heart, rejects the whisperings and they are cut off very quickly. If there is no sin in them, why should you worry?

Note: This seeker had pledged bayʿah to a person who belonged to the spiritual lineage of Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was gone to Makkah Muʿazzamah at the time. He benefited tremendously from this reply and sent another letter in which he wrote: "All praise is due to Allāh I am neither inundated by whisperings nor false premises. They have been severed and obliterated completely. I do not know how to thank Hadrat for having steered me during these difficult times…"

(b) A seeker wrote that sometimes his heart experiences certain whisperings which cause him to feel that his īmān is in danger. Hadrat Wālā wrote to him: "This is a mercy. Have you not read the Hadīth in which it is stated: 'That is a clear indication of īmān'? A major advantage of this is that the root of self-conceit is chopped off. It is certainly and most definitely not harmful.

[1] Ibid.

(c) Do not resort to any special procedures, efforts and enquiry in this regard. Just give a superficial attention to it and all these fears will disappear gradually.[1]

(d) A simple treatment for this is that when you are overwhelmed by such thoughts, you must wilfully direct yourself towards a good act and remain directed towards it. If, after this, the thoughts still remain or new thoughts come to your mind, then they are certainly beyond your will because two opposing thoughts cannot come together at one and the same time by your own will. Your confusion is thus removed. If you are wilfully neglectful in directing yourself towards good thoughts, then be warned: neglect is atoned for through seeking forgiveness, and you must then be conscious of the above procedure. It procedure is extremely easy. There is no simpler procedure. Make it your practice and do not worry in the least.[2]

Statements

Do Not Be Worried By Whisperings And Fears

1. A seeker must neither be worried by detestable fears nor consider himself to be rejected [by Allāh *taʿālā*] because of them. These are whisperings which are cast by Satan in the heart. This is similar to a person whispering evil things into another person's ears without the latter having the ability to stop him. Although he detests the whisperings, he is forced to hear them. He will be a hearer – not a listener nor a speaker. So what sin did he commit!? In fact, he will be rewarded for the harm which he is suffering because of his detestation.

His example is like a person rushing enthusiastically to meet his beloved king. On the way, he meets the king's enemy who begins speaking ill of the king in an insolent manner in order to prevent the person from going to him. He will certainly be offended by this, but his intelligence and desire to meet the king demand that he pays no attention whatsoever to the prattling of this unworthy hypocrite. If he were to start disputing and arguing with him, he may well miss the visiting time of the king.

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[1] *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.
[2] *'Ilāj al-Khiyāl, Juz Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, an-Nūr, vol. 15, no. 3, Rajab al-Murajjab 1353 A.H.

He must rather impose patience on himself, remain silent and continue on his way. Once he reaches the court of the king, the wretched fellow [the enemy] will first of all automatically lag behind. [If he has the audacity of entering the court] he will be held by his ears and expelled. In most cases, this is the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* that when a person attains total proximity with Him, whisperings come to an end. If, due to certain reasons and special wisdoms, they do not come to an end, the person must still not become worried because there is absolutely no punishment for unwitting whisperings and they are definitely not sins. Yes, the person will certainly experience discomfort and distress, but he will be rewarded for this and his ranks will be elevated.

The Peculiar Nature Of Whisperings And Fears

2. Whisperings are like an electric wire. If you hold a live wire with the intention of pulling it towards you, it will shock you. If you hold it with the intention of moving it away from you, it will still shock you. It is best not to touch it at all – neither to draw it towards you nor to move it away from you. This is the way of acquiring safety from whisperings and fears – i.e. do not even pay any attention to them; neither to draw them towards you nor to drive them away from you.

An Example Of The Heart

3. The heart is like the main street on which everyone – the rich, the poor, noble and ignoble – walks. No one has the right to stop the other. There can be no objection to even a tanner and toilet cleaner walking on it. Each one is walking and going towards his destination. Allāh *taʿālā* made the heart in the same way. All types of thoughts – good and bad – enter it. No one has the right to demand only good thoughts to enter it and to completely ban evil thoughts. If evil thoughts enter unwittingly, there is nothing to fear. Yes, evil thoughts should neither be brought wittingly nor should they be entertained wittingly. Thereafter, the person must continue with his tasks peacefully and calmly. He must not pay any heed whatsoever to detestable whisperings.

The Cause Of A Seeker's Worry

4. A seeker becomes worried because he thinks that whisperings are created in the heart. This is not the case. It is Satan who casts them from the outside. For example, if a

house is filled with grain, it does not mean that the grain was grown in it. Rather, it was grown on a farm, brought from there, and the house was filled with it.

Whatever Hadrat Wālā said above was with regard to whisperings entering the heart. As for their actual occurrence in the heart, he said: It seems as if the whisperings have embedded themselves in the depths of the heart, but this is not the case. They do not occur within the heart itself, but remain around it. As for what is thought to be within the heart, they are not whisperings but their effects and their reflections. The only thing which occurs within the heart is firmly-embedded belief. This is understood from Allāh's words:

وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيْمَانُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ

Īmān has not entered in your hearts as yet.

Whisperings and fears are nothing but assumed and superficial things. This is understood from the following words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

إن الشيطان جاثم على قلب ابن ادم، فإذا ذكر الله خنس، وإذا غفل وسوس.

Satan is perched on man's heart. When man remembers Allāh, Satan withdraws. When man is heedless of Allāh, Satan whispers to him.

Look at the difference between the word *fī* (in) in the Qur'ānic verse and the word *ʿalā* (on) in the above Hadīth.

Hadrat Wālā continues: This is similar to a fly sitting on a mirror. Because its reflection is falling inside the mirror, it seems as if the fly is sitting inside whereas it is sitting on the mirror. What we are seeing inside the mirror is not the fly but merely its reflection. This does not cause any defect to the mirror.

One Ought To Rejoice Over Whisperings

5. Satan only casts whisperings in a heart which has īmān. Like a thief who only goes to a house in which there is some wealth. Instead of being grieved by whisperings, a person should be rationally pleased by them because Satan's casting of whisperings into his heart is a sign that the wealth of īmān is present in it. A Hadīth gives glad tidings in this regard: "That is a clear indication of īmān." When a seeker rejoices over

whisperings, Satan will lose hope and give up his practice because he cannot tolerate a believer to rejoice. In the first place, he had cast the whisperings to cause him worry and grief. When he sees him rejoicing over the whisperings, he will give up casting them inside his heart. In addition to this, rational happiness over whisperings will strengthen the heart. This strength in itself will help the seeker to repulse whisperings. When they are repulsed, the natural grief will also disappear. In this way, rational happiness will be the cause of natural happiness.

The Author's Own Experience

I [the author] personally experienced this. When I am grieved by whisperings, my heart feels very weak. This results in even more whisperings, causing severe damage to me. After I am rationally at ease with this matter, I acquire natural peace of mind as well. Allāh forbid, these whisperings are not because of evil beliefs. After experiencing this peace of mind, the whisperings are either repulsed completely or at least reduced. Just recently I had a light fever which caused a severe inundation of useless whisperings on my heart and mind. This caused me intense worry and grief. When I mentioned it to my respected teacher, Maulānā Sirāj Ahmad Sāhib, he – based on his own experience - supported my suspicion that it was because of the light fever. He said: "It is certainly because of the fever." After explaining it according to medical principles, I was fully convinced that the light fever is definitely the cause of these whisperings, and – Allāh forbid – not evil beliefs. The moment I became convinced of this, my doubts were repulsed and my natural retraction was replaced by expansion and cheerfulness. The cheerfulness then strengthened the heart which repulsed the fever. Sorrow is by and large the cause of a light fever.

In short, medical conditions also cause an inundation of whisperings. This is especially so with regard to weakness of the heart, mind and a light fever which cause useless and imaginary thoughts and immerse a person into baseless thoughts. Sometimes, grief caused by whisperings also results in medical conditions, which in turn result in an increase in whisperings. In essence, a medical condition is sometimes a cause, and whisperings the effects of it. And sometimes, whisperings are causes, and medical conditions their effects. A

person should also consult a medical doctor in such situations. Hadrat Wālā often gives this advice to those who are experiencing such conditions. But he adds: “No matter what the cause of unintentional whisperings, a person is neither taken to task for them nor should they cause fear and grief. Although natural worry and grief are not reprehensible – in fact, they are signs of īmān – a person must rationally keep himself unconcerned so that his natural grief disappears and it does not cause him worry.”

Change Of Thoughts Is Also Beneficial

From my personal experience as described above, I also realized that whisperings and fears are repulsed by the changing of thoughts. Hadrat Wālā emphatically states that it is immensely beneficial for a seeker to meditate over this: “Allāh *taʿālā* loves me.” In fact, Hadrat Wālā goes to the extent of saying that even if your condition is not worthy of Allāh’s love for you, then in accordance with the following Hadīth Qudsī, you must have this good thought that Allāh *taʿālā* loves you. The words of the Hadīth are:

أنا عند ظن عبدي بي

I treat My servant according to his thoughts about Me.

The signs of Allāh’s love for you are also present. After all, He made you a Muslim, blessed you with concern for Dīn, and conferred you with natural grief over detestable whisperings. This is a clear indication of īmān. Meditation over Allāh’s love for you has other spiritual benefits. This is not the place for details. Another major benefit of it is that this meditation is not only a powerful and proven method of repulsing whisperings and fears, but an essential treatment for it. The reason for this is that because of evil whisperings, a seeker imagines himself to be very far from and disliked by Allāh *taʿālā* because of his fear and ignorance. This is certainly not the case.

Thus, based on the principle of treatment through opposites, the treatment for this baseless thought is to meditate over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* loves you. In the present condition, this is in fact in accordance with the reality because whisperings and fears are experienced only by believers and accepted servants of Allāh *taʿālā*; not by unbelievers and those who are rejected by Him. The reason for this is that Satan is fully at ease with

the unbelievers and rejected ones because they are totally subservient to him in deviation. Now that he has immersed them in such a serious danger, what is the need for him to put them through whisperings which are certainly not harmful in Dīn?

As for the believers and accepted servants of Allāh *taʿālā*, Satan is always after them and is bent on leading them astray through whisperings, or, at least, causing them worry in this regard. So you should never allow him to fulfil his desire. In other words, consider – rationally – evil whisperings to be evil and never attach yourself to them by your choice. And never permit them to take the form of actions and deeds, neither at present nor in the future. Instead of being saddened by whisperings, consider them to be signs of īmān and be rationally satisfied and happy with them. Think to yourself: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* my beliefs are correct."

Practise on the procedures outlined by Hadrat Wālā in section two (mentioned previously). Be fully at ease with yourself and remain occupied in dhikr, acts of obedience, the essentials of Dīn and worldly essentials without giving any consideration to whether you have an inclination to carry them out or not. In fact, as per the teaching of Hadrat Wālā, lawful worldly engagements should also be carried out because they also act as shields against evil whisperings.

An Excellent Treatment For Whisperings And Fears

6. Never become occupied in trying to repulse whisperings or else they will inundate you even more. Satan is like a dog – the more you run out of fear from it, the more it will bark and run after you. If you do not bother about it in the least, by neither fearing it nor running from it, it will fall silent automatically and go away.

Therefore, an excellent treatment for whisperings is to pay no attention whatsoever to them. Immersing oneself in whisperings and worrying about them increases worry, it does not treat it. This results in an excessive inundation of whisperings. Although there is absolutely no Dīnī harm in their inundation – they do not entail sin because they are unintentional – they cause immense psychological harm. The procedures which we explain to repulse them are shown to

repulse this harm, and not because they are sinful. After all, it is not good to put yourself into undue hardship and stress.

Hadrat Wālā adds that whisperings are sometimes caused by fastidiousness and extreme perceptiveness.

They are also caused by medical conditions, evils of the self, Satanic influences, sins, and as a test from Allāh *taʿālā*. Sometimes more than one of these causes combine. In such a situation, when the cause cannot be identified, all treatments are brought together. However, in every situation, apart from specific treatments, the best treatment of all is not to pay any attention whatsoever to the whisperings and to abstain from delving into the whisperings and their causes.

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to evils of the self: "One is not taken to account for capabilities to commit evil because these are not within one's choice. Yes, he is punished for actions which are within his control. So all a person has to do is not to allow himself to act on the demands of evil capabilities. He must not worry about trying to rid himself off the evil capabilities because they cannot be removed. Yes, they do become weak through striving and repeatedly acting against the self.

The reason for this is that capabilities are innate, and innate capabilities do not change. However, actions and deeds are not innate. A person has control over them. He must allow them [actions] to be committed, and not grieve over why his innate capabilities are the way they are. This is because Allāh *taʿālā* is the Creator and also the All-Wise. There are countless wisdoms behind whatever He does. Moreover, who is there who does not have evils of the self?! Almost everyone has them, except whom Allāh *taʿālā* wills not to have.

This is because this is how the self is structured. However, as long as those evils are not brought into action by one's will, and they are not brought into the open through actions, a person is not taken to task for them. For example, a matchstick has all the components to cause it to ignite and burn, but as long as it is not struck, a person can keep it in his pocket and walk about without any fear. Yes, he has to be always cautious that it does not strike against anything which would ignite it.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's Treatment

7. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had given a unique treatment for whisperings and fears. He said: "Think to yourself: Allāh *taʿālā* has made the heart like a turbulent ocean in which waves of whisperings strike incessantly all the time. Look at Allāh's power! Look at Allāh's manufacture!" After quoting this statement, Hadrat Wālā said: "Glory to Allāh! What a fine and subtle treatment! The whisperings which the seeker was considering to be means of driving him away from Allāh *taʿālā* have been turned into reflections of Allāh's beauty and causes of His proximity."

I [the author] consider it appropriate to quote another subtle treatment of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib which he had written for Hadrat Wālā bearing in mind the latter's lofty condition and elevated rank. This was quoted previously in the section where Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's letters to Hadrat Wālā were listed. A part of it is quoted here:

> …when you experience anything in your heart, consider it to be from Allāh *taʿālā*. Those that are harmful will be repulsed by this meditation. (Letter no. 45, dated 19 Rajab 1316 A.H.

A Prerequisite For The Above Treatments To Be Effective

By the help and grace of Allāh *taʿālā* we come to the end of Hadrat Wālā's written and verbal treatments for whisperings and fears. We now quote an essential precautionary note of Hadrat Wālā himself with regard to all these treatments. Hadrat Wālā issued this precaution with much concern after this entire section was read to him. This precautionary note is essential, in the absence of which this entire section on the treatments for whisperings and fears will be incomplete. The precautionary note is:

A prerequisite for these treatments to be beneficial is that they must never be done with the intention of treatments for the repulsing of whisperings and fears. Rather, they must be considered to be independent beneficial actions. At the same time, the person must not wait for the results, i.e. for the repulsing of whisperings to take place. If he waits for the results, it will result in hastiness, hastiness will cause a demand or pressing need, and this will result in apprehension. How can whisperings be repulsed in the presence of

apprehension? Instead of waiting for the whisperings to be repulsed, a person must be totally prepared and think to himself: "Even if my entire life passes without salvation from whisperings, I am not bothered. I am going to continue doing what I have been ordered to do. I am not accountable for anything more." And in every condition and situation, firmly believe and be conscious of this fact and essential belief that Allāh *taʿālā* is the absolute controller and the all-wise Being.

Since Allāh *taʿālā* is the absolute controller, He does as He wills to His servants. No one has the right to object. Since He is the all-wise Being, we must be fully convinced that every action of His is based on absolute wisdom even though we may not know the details of this wisdom.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* we now complete the second section on treatments for retraction and fear. We now present the third section.

Third Section

This section contains meditation on and consciousness of certain Qur'ānic verses, Aḫādīth, and a repetition of some poems of men of insight.

Qur'ānic verses

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ

Allāh does not burden anyone except what he can bear. He receives what he has earned and on him befalls what he did.[1]

Repetition of the following supplication:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا اِنْ نَّسِيْنَا اَوْ اَخْطَأْنَا، رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا اِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا، رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ، وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا اَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِيْنَ.

O our Sustainer! Take us not to task if we forget or err. O our Sustainer! Place not upon us a heavy burden as You had placed on the people before us. O our Sustainer! Make us not bear that burden for which we have no strength. Pardon us, forgive us and

[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 286.

have mercy on us. You alone are our Sustainer. Help us against the unbelievers.[1]

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوْبَنَا بَعْدَ اِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً، اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

O our Sustainer! Do not swerve our hearts after You have already guided us. Bestow upon us mercy from You. You alone are the giver of all things.[2]

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا اَنْفُسَنَا وَاِنْ لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِيْنَ

O our Sustainer! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and show mercy to us, we will most certainly be among the losers.

Allāh *taʿālā* said in verse 284 of Sūrah al-Baqarah: "If you reveal what is in your minds or conceal it, Allāh will call you to account for it." Outwardly it means that we will be taken to account for the concealed matters of our selves as well. But this does not refer to unintentional matters. Man will only be taken to task for matters which are within his control. Allāh *taʿālā* does not make any person accountable (for injunctions of the Sharīʿah). In other words, He only labels as obligatory or unlawful those matters which are within man's power (and will). He is rewarded for what he does by his will and intention, and is punished for what he does by his will and intention. (He is not answerable for what is beyond his power, and for that in which there is no will and intent). There is neither reward nor punishment for it. Whisperings are beyond one's control. It is neither unlawful for them to enter the heart nor obligatory to prevent them from entering. And there is no punishment for them.

Note: Anyone wanting additional details on this verse must refer to the last section of Sūrah al-Baqarah in *Bayān al-Qur'ān*.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 8.

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن الله تجاوز عن أمتي ما وسوست به صدورها ما لم تعمل به (أي ما دام لم يتعلق به العمل إن كان فعليا) أو تتكلم (إن كان قوليا). متفق عليه

Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said: "Allāh* taʿālā *overlooked the whisperings which are in the chests of my followers as long as they do not put them into action (if the actions are with regard to actions and deeds) or do not utter them (if they are to do with words).*

وعنه قال: جاء ناس من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فسألوه: إنا نجد في أنفسنا ما يتعاظم أحدنا أن نتكلم به. قال: أو قد وجدتموه؟ قالوا: نعم. قال: ذاك صريح الإيمان. رواه مسلم.

Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu ʿanhu *said: Some Companions came to Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *and said: "We experience some thoughts within ourselves which we consider to be too serious to speak about." He asked: "Have you started experiencing that?" They replied: "Yes." He said: "That is a clear indication of īmān."*

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم جاءه رجل فقال: إني أحدث نفسي بالشيء لأن أكون حممة أحب إلي من أن أتكلم به. قال: الحمد لله الذي رد أمره إلى الوسوسة. رواه أبو داؤد.

Ibn ʿAbbās radiyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that a man came to Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *and said: "I experience certain thoughts which cause me to prefer becoming charcoal than speaking about them." Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said: "All praise is due to Allāh who reverted his matter to whisperings." (narrated by Abū Dāwūd)*

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يأتي الشيطان أحدكم فيقول: من خلق كذا، من خلق كذا؟ حتى يقول من خلق ربك؟ فإذا بلغه فليستعذ بالله وولى عنه. متفق عليه.

Abū Hurayrah ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that Rasūlullāh* <u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said: "Satan will come to you and ask you: 'Who created such and such thing? Who created such and such thing.' He will continue posing this question until he asks: 'Who created your Sustainer?' Once he reaches this question, you must seek refuge in Allāh* taʿālā *and turn away from Satan."*

وعنه قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم (في مثل هذا) فمن وجد من ذلك شيئا فليقل امنت بالله ورسله. متفق عليه

Abū Hurayrah ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that Rasūlullāh* <u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said in a similar <u>H</u>adīth: "Whoever experiences that must say: 'I believe in Allāh and His Messengers.'"*

وعنه قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم (في مثل هذا) فإذا قالوا ذلك فقولوا: الله أحد، الله الصمد، لم يلد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفوا أحد. ثم ليتفل عن يساره ثلاثا، وليستعذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم. رواه أبو داؤد. (مشكوة، باب الوسوسة)

Abū Hurayrah ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that Rasūlullāh* <u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said in a similar <u>H</u>adīth: "Whoever experiences any of this must say: 'Allāh is one. Allāh is all-independent. He did not beget nor was He begotten. He has no equal to Him.' the person must then spit three times to his left side and seek refuge in Allāh* taʿālā *from the accursed Satan." (narrated by Abū Dāwūd)*

قال النووي فقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم ذاك صريح الإيمان معناه استعظامكم الكلام به صريح الإيمان، فإن استعظام هذا أو شدة الخوف منه ومن النطق به فضلا عن اعتقاده إنما يكون ممن استكمل الإيمان إيمانا محققا وانتفت عنه الريبة والشكوك إلى قوله وقيل معناه إن الشيطان إنما يوسوس لمن أيس من حيث شاء ولا يقتصر في حقه على الوسوسة بل يتلاعب به كيف أراده، فعلى هذا معنى الحديث سبب الوسوسة محض الإيمان أو الوسوسة علامة محض الإيمان، وهذا القول اختيار القاضي عياض.

وأما قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم فمن وجد ذلك فليقل امنت بالله، وفي الرواية الأخرى فليعذ بالله ولينته، فمعناه الإعراض عن هذا الخاطر الباطل والإلتجاء إلى الله في إذهابه، ونقل عن الإمام المازري قال ظاهر الحديث أنه صلى الله عليه وسلم أمرهم أن يدفعوا الخواطر بالإعراض عنها

والرد لها من غير استدلال، وإلا نظر في إبطالها إلى قوله لما كان أمرا طاريا بغير أصل دفع بغير نظر في دليل، إذ لا أصل له ينظر فيه، وقال في معناه إذا عرض له هذا الوسواس فليلجأ إلى الله تعالى في دفع شره عنه وليعرض عن الفكر في ذلك، وليعلم أن هذا الخاطر من وسوسة الشيطان، وهو إنما يسعى بالفساد والإغواء فليعرض عن الإصغاء إلى وسوسته وليبادر إلى قطعها بالإشتغال بغيرها.

Imām Nawawī rahimahullāh *said: When Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said: "That is a clear indication of īmān", it means: The fact that you consider it a serious matter to even speak about it is a clear indication of īmān. This is because considering it to be a serious matter, intense fear of it or speaking about it – let alone believing in it – stems from a person who has perfected his īmān and has no doubts and misgivings in this regard.*

Another meaning is that Satan only whispers to the one in whom he has lost hope. He does not restrict himself to whispering to him. Rather, he plays around with him in an effort to deviate him. Based on this explanation, the Hadīth would mean that absolute īmān [in the person] was the cause of whisperings. Or, the whispering is a sign of absolute īmān. This is the preferred view of Qādī ʿIyād.

As for the words: "Whoever experiences this must say: I believe in Allāh'", and in another narration: "He must seek protection in Allāh and be on his guard", this means that the person must turn away from this baseless whispering and turn to Allāh taʿālā *to remove the whispering.*

Imām al-Māzirī said: "The obvious meaning of this Hadīth is that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *instructed them to repulse the whisperings by turning away from them and refuting them without seeking any proof and without looking at how to refute them." He adds: "Since this is a temporary condition without any foundation, it must be repulsed without delving into it. After all, it has no basis which a person has to look into." He also said with regard to its meaning: "When he experiences these whisperings, he must seek protection in Allāh* taʿālā *to repulse the evil of the whispering from him, he must abstain from thinking too deeply about it, and he must realize that it is from Satan who is striving to delude and deceive him. He should therefore abstain from paying any attention to Satan's whisperings and hasten in cutting them off by occupying himself in other matters."*

Poems

By Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*

1. When one has high aspirations, hardships are converted into comforts.

2. O heart! You will suffer whisperings if you come out of hardships and come into comforts.

3. If gratitude is ingrained in you, you will not consider anything to be a failure. Everything will be considered to be the will of the Beloved.

4. O my life! Even His displeasure becomes His pleasure. May my heart be sacrificed for my Beloved who causes me pain.

5. I am intensely in love with mercy and anger. How surprising! I love two opposites!

6. When you experience grief, turn to seeking forgiveness immediately. If you have come here by the order of the One who creates grief, you may work here.

7. Remain patient over the calamities of time. Also be grateful for the bounties of that all-powerful Being.

8. Look at the creation and designing of Allāh *taʿālā* and give up your plotting and planning. The plotting and planning of the greatest plotters are useless before His designing.

9. Since your plotting is obliterated in the creation and designing of Allāh *taʿālā*, O you who are drowning in confusion, make a place of refuge for yourself.

10. The person who takes refuge in this place will acquire permanency which will remain in progress and loftiness forever.

11. Strive to enter this place of refuge so that you may acquire divine knowledge.

12. When He restricts you to one place, remain restricted. When He releases you, you must become energetic and alert.

13. Do not go down the alleys of despair because there are many hopes. Do not go towards darkness because there are countless suns.

A Supplication by H̲ad̲rat Shīrāzī *rah̲imahullāh*

14. O King of the beautiful! We are beseeching You from the sorrow of solitude. Without You, the heart is on the verge of death. This is the time for You to come back.

15. O You whose pain contains my cure on this bed of failure. O You whose remembrance brings me love in my solitude.

16. We are points of a compass on the circle of divine decree. Whatever You decide is solely through Your kindness. Whatever You say is Your order.

17. My heart is soaked in the blood of this intoxicated circle. Give me a drink so that I may solve this problem through this goblet of drink.

□

18. I have no place of refuge in this world apart from Your court. My secret is known to none except this court.

□

19. The darkness of separation caused my life to reach my lips in the dark night. It is now the time for You to come into me like the luminous moon.

20. In my remorse over not seeing You, I am giving away my life like the morning. It may well be that You will come out like the bright sun.

21. I am adhering to the dust at Your threshold waiting for Your gaze to settle on me. It may well be that You will appear like the cypress.[1]

□

A Consoling And Comforting Ode

22. Do not worry, the lost Yūsūf [*ʿalayhis salām*] will return to Kanʿān one day. Do not worry, the grief-filled house will become a garden one day.

23. The condition of this sorrowful heart will change. So do not make the heart despondent. The mad man will return with the possessions, do not worry.

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[1] The cypress tree is normally used to describe gracefulness.

24. The ups and downs of time will continue, and the desired day will arrive as we would like. Do not worry, time never remains the same.

25. Since you do not have knowledge of the unseen, you should not lose hope. Do not worry, there are many games behind the curtains.

26. Anyone who wandered worriedly in the world and did not find anyone to console him will eventually find a sympathizer. So do not worry.

27. If, in your enthusiasm to go to the Ka'bah, you walked into the jungle and the thorns are pricking you, even then you must not worry.

28. Although the path is very dangerous and the destination is not appearing, every path is not an endless path. So do not worry.

29. O heart! If a destructive flood uproots the very foundation of your existence, you have a sailor like H̲ad̲rat Nūh̲ *'alayhis salām* for your ship. So do not worry.

30. O you sweet-voiced bird! If the spring of life remains, you will be perched on the flower at the edge of the garden.

31. O H̲āfiz̲! Do not worry as long as you are able to sit in the corner of your room of solitude and are able to engage in dhikr, prayer and recitation of the Qur'ān in the dark nights.

□

32. The good news has come that the days of grief are not here to stay. If those conditions will not remain, then these conditions too are not permanent.

33. This is not the place to complain and be grateful over bad and good conditions because no one ever remains in eternal grief.

□

34. O heart! Remain steadfast on patience. Do not worry because the morning always follows the night, and the night always ends with the dawn.

35. O H̲āfiz̲! Do not fear because that Yūsuf [*'alayhis salām*] of Egypt will come back, and you will come out of your grief.

36. Do not cry and sob out of grief. I have drawn a good omen and there is someone who is going to respond to your call.

37. O Hāfiz! Be patient over the difficult conditions. There will certainly come a day when you will realize your objective.

38. No matter what a seeker has to face in the path of Sufism, it is best for him. O heart! No one goes astray as long as he remains on the straight path.

39. O Hāfiz! There will come a day when you will acquire a true bond with Allāh *taʿālā* provided you have the strength to wait.

An Advice In The Form Of An Ode

40. Lovers do not have the choice to instruct their own selves. They will only do what You say to them.

41. O heart! Come out of your anger and be happy because the confidant spends a good time in the dish of separation.

□

42. There is a major difference between the lover and the beloved. When the beloved displays coquetry, you must display your devotion.

43. By the life of the beloved, your grief will not tear the curtain provided you have full faith in the Real Doer.

□

44. An ignorant person reaches the seven heavens through his wealth. But the righteous do not reach the seven heavens without begging and beseeching.

45. O Hāfiz! Be patient because the one who sacrifices his life in the path of love does not reach his beloved.

□

46. If a gardener wishes to spend five days among the flowers, he will have to be patient over the thorns of separation like the nightingale.

47. O heart! Do not beg and beseech out of grief over your imprisonment in her hair-locks. An intelligent bird has to remain patient when it gets caught in a net.

48. If this mad heart desires those hair-locks, it will have to bear the coquetry of that intoxicated beloved.

49. The one who needs a face like the jasmine and hair-locks like the hyacinth,[1] it is unlawful for him to look at ordinary faces and hair-locks.

50. It is an act of unbelief to rely on one's piety and deeds in the path of Sufism. If a traveller possesses even one hundred excellent qualities, he must place his trust in Allāh.

51. Do not become distressed if you experience grief on any day. You should rather be grateful that it does not go from bad to worse.

52. People say: Rocks turn to pearls after a person exercises patience. Yes, they do turn to pearls but only after shedding the blood of your heart.

53. I am begging at the house of love and requesting justice. It may well be that my heart receives salvation from the hand of grief.

54. O lover! If you desire union [with your beloved], then do not grieve. You will have to drink your blood [experience difficulties] at all times.

55. Some are given a goblet of wine, others are given the blood of the heart. This is how divine decree works.

56. You must desire to acquire your objective by acting against your habit because I have to acquire peace of the heart from these distressed hair-locks.

57. O heart! You are a slave, so do not complain to the king. Complaining about more and less is not appropriate for love.

58. Do not bother about dirty and clean. Just remain silent. Whatever our cup-bearer has given us is solely out of his kindness.

59. Do not worry about colour and fragrance. Just drink the drink because nothing but the intoxicating drink [of love] can remove the rust of your heart.

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[1] A plant having a sweet fragrance to which the Persians compare the hair-locks of their sweethearts.

60. O Hāfiz! Live your life with the pain of love and keep silent. Do not reveal the secrets of love to the rationalists.

61. O Hāfiz! Do not be distressed by the autumn winds in the garden of time. Think with your intelligence that you do not get flowers without thorns.

62. O Hāfiz! Lower your head before the threshold of submission because if you were to fight it, then time will also fight you.

63. O heart! You seem to like the company of comfort. But remember that the wing of love is dear; do not leave it.

64. O Hāfiz! If this path could be crossed by the feet of yearning, no one would have given the reins of separation to the hands of separation.

65. I am the one who treats love, so take this drink because this concoction will satisfy you and put an end to the grief of calamity.

66. None can solve my problems except the drink which is the colour of fire.

□

An Encouraging Ode

By Shaykh Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*

67. Quite some time has passed since anyone loved my ways. A grief of this nature is a source of happiness for my grief-stricken heart.

68. O my Sustainer who is the object of visiting this Ka‘bah! The thorns of this path are flowers and buds for me.

□

70. Making myself into a slave for Your sake is more appealing to me than kingship because the humiliation of Your oppression is a source of honour and high rank for me.

71. The one who has been brought up and nurtured in comforts and vanities cannot find the path of the Beloved because love is the work of those who are inundated by calamities and hardships.

72. An irresolute moth does not have the courage to burn its wings. Weak people cannot carry out acts which demand the sacrificing of their lives.

73. O heart! Move away because love is no play and amusement. The ball of love cannot be thrown with the stick of desire.

74. I am inclined towards union [with Allāh *taʿālā*] while His will is separation. I have abandoned my desire so that the will of my Beloved can be fulfilled.

75. Although your heart is immersed in blood, come with smiling lips. It should not happen that if you are injured, you must make a noise like a flute.

76. Do not worry about separation and union. You should rather seek the pleasure of your Beloved because wishing for anything else is a blemish.

77. The ups and downs in the jungle of love are nets of tribulation. Where are the brave ones who do not fear tribulations?

78. If the high waves of calamities reach the skies, a Gnostic does not allow his provisions of good fortune to get wet by the water.

79. You ought to go dancing beneath his sword of grief because the one who is killed at his hands reaches a good end.

80. O Hāfiz! In my search for the pearls of union [with Allāh *taʿālā*], it will be most appropriate for me to turn my eyes into oceans of tears and to dive into them.

□

By Hadrat ʿAttār *rahimahullāh*

81. A seeker has to be patient and forbearing because I have not heard of any alchemist becoming fed up.

82. If you are a true lover, then lose yourself. If not, take control of the path of wellness.

83. Do not be fearful of love reducing you to dust. Once it destroys you, you will enjoy eternity.

84. Those who are madly in love have such a wonderful time! If they suffer one injury, they consider the other to be its balm.

85. They continually drink the drink of pain. They remain silent even when they find it bitter.

86. The prisoner of love does not want freedom from it. The one who is caught in its net does not want to be released from it.

87. Patience will give you success. Pain and hardship will give you freedom.

□

By Nawāb Mustafā Khān Sāhib

88. If you are awaiting happiness, there is nothing apart from patience at the time of calamity.

□

89. If you desire a few moments of comfort you will have to live by shedding the blood of your liver, breaking your heart to pieces, and burning your life.

90. O nightingale! Your abode is in the heart of the flower. Ask it to burn your nest with fire and wind.

91. You are shedding the flowers of meeting the beloved under the wing of love. Spend one night crying and beseeching to Allāh *taʿālā* and you will experience the next morning with a thousand joys.

92. O you remorseful one! Do not grieve. The heart is a true witness to the fact that this house of grief will become a house of joy.

93. Wait, do not complain, and do not be angry at the house of love. The promise of union is not deserving of demands.

□

94. What is love? Say it is to become the slave of the beloved. It means handing over the heart to another and living in bewilderment.

95. It entails staring at her hair-locks and looking at her face. You will have to rejoice sometimes, and be worried on other occasions.

□

96. I am selling my head in exchange for the sword of your demeanour. I am selling my liver in exchange for the tip of your arrow.

97. In order to get out of the cage (jail) of captivity, the captive aiming for the orchard is prepared to sell his feathers and wings.

98. If you keep me alive, it is your bestowal. If you kill me, I am still sacrificed for you. My heart is enamoured by you, so you can do as you like.

99. Although I am lying at a distance, I am happy over the hope that my beloved will hold my hand once again.

100. Sometimes there is happiness and sometimes grief. But you do not know from where this happiness and grief has come.

By the help and grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the third section on the treatment for retraction and fear is now concluded.

Forty Points For The Spiritually Injured

1. Tribulation is from among the essentials of Sufism

In most cases the descent of tribulation is generally from the essentials of Sufism.

2. The norm of Allāh

It has been the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* with most seekers to cause them to experience retraction and expansion, fear and hope, fear and affinity, ascent and descent, and increase and decrease during a major portion of their lives. Their hearts – which are manifestations of the True Beloved – continually receive the beauty of Allāh *taʿālā* sometimes and His power at other times.

3. How to put an end to whisperings

As far as possible, a seeker must resort to fortifying tonics and refreshing practices in order to strengthen and relax the heart. As far as possible, he must abstain from distressing causes so that the heart remains strong and he is able to bear such conditions. A sorrowful incident which is beyond one's control (e.g. the death of someone) is from among the strong causes of

distress to the heart. This is irrespective of whether the sorrow is because of one's own pain, out of concern for another or the effect of the definite or assumed consequences of an incident playing in one's mind all the time or speaking about it verbally. In other words, to wilfully think about it and delve into it or to speak about it a lot. This causes considerable damage to the heart and results in its distress and perplexity. Although it is not within one's control to be naturally saddened by a gory incident and also not harmful, thinking of it all the time and speaking about it repeatedly is certainly within one's control and also harmful. Just as bringing it into existence or its continuation is within one's control, its removal is also within one's control. The manner of doing this is to occupy the heart in some important obligation.

I added the condition of "excessive" in my prohibition to thinking of a sorrowful incident. This is because to abstain from talking about it completely and "bottling" oneself totally from the incident have also proven to be harmful. When all the dust and murkiness remain "bottled" inside all the time, it causes a withdrawal in one's temperament and the strength to fight the sorrow decreases. It would therefore be wise to occasionally speak about the sorrowful incident in the beginning in a balanced manner and within the limits of the Sharīʿah to a religious-minded well-wisher. This is also supported by Ah̠ādīth. (These were quoted previously)

When showing your concern for another, ensure it is within the limit. The limit is that it must benefit the other without harming your own self. Thus, a rational concern is sufficient. A natural concern must be kept within the limit to the extent that it is needed for the rational concern to be effective. Do not allow it to go beyond this limit. If not, experience has shown that it too is harmful. Too much of concern and feeling sorry for another disturb the heart. Sometimes this results in thoughts which are contradictory to accepting divine decree, and this is most dangerous.

Do not go to extremes in abstaining from permissible occupations and do not opt for total solitude so that the heart is prepared for such things which would prevent fears of this nature from entering it. If a person wants to remove the air which is in a bottle, a simple way of doing it is to fill it with water. Air will neither remain inside nor will it able to enter.

The same applies to the heart. When witnessing the unseen [benedictions of Allāh *taʿālā*], lawful occupations act as shields against fears. It is common sense that the self cannot focus totally and equally on two things at the same time. However, it should be borne in mind that this does not include increasing one's love for these lawful occupations because love for them is also harmful. Mere organizational interactions and diversions are enough. For example, arrangements for one's livelihood, a little recreation, reading history books, and so on.

The best way of putting an end to intense and prolonged fears is to disregard them totally. Do not even turn your attention towards them. In fact, do not even turn to them with the intention of repulsing them. You should rather turn your attention to dhikr and occupy yourself in it. But here too, do not go to extremes in your attention to it and don't be overenthusiastic. If you persist in doing this, you will get tired and bored and the fears will start taking a toll on you.

4. Beneficial meditations

From the statements of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*:

(a) Whatever thought enters the heart, consider it to be from Allāh *taʿālā*. Those that are harmful will be repulsed through this meditation.

(b) Think to yourself: Allāh *taʿālā* has made the heart like a turbulent ocean in which waves of whisperings strike incessantly all the time. Look at Allāh's power! Look at Allāh's work of art!

5. Consider whisperings to be external

An advice from Hājī Sayyid Muhammad ʿĀbid Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh*

You must think to yourself that these fears are not entering your heart but leaving it. When a thief gets into a house in order to steal, his eyes are still focused on the door. If he starts to flee after hearing the house people waking up, he is seen at the door.

6. An overwhelming spiritual condition does not negate excellence

The spiritual masters are also overwhelmed by spiritual conditions occasionally. This does not negate their excellence.

7. A man of high rank does not transgress the limit

When a man of rank is overwhelmed by a spiritual condition, he does not move out of the limits. On the other hand, a man of spiritual conditions occasionally goes beyond the limits. However, he is not sinning in this condition because he is not accountable for what he does during this overwhelming condition.

8. The conditions of a man of rank are spiritual

A man of rank also experiences certain conditions but there is subtleness in them because they are spiritual. On the other hand, the conditions experienced by a man of conditions stem from the self, and they are weighty.

9. A person who experiences retraction and fear certainly goes through severe distress, but this does not cause any harm in traversing the path.

10. There are graces in whisperings

In certain types of retraction, the whisperings contain subtle graces of the Merciful. They are:

(a) The person does not have self-conceit. He realizes that he is in a bad condition.

(b) He is always trembling. He does not pride over his knowledge and deeds. He has seen the reality of his knowledge and deeds and realizes that they are nothing.

(c) Once he experiences this obstacle, it develops strength in him to combat Satan. He does not fear Satan because he cannot do anything more than what he already did. Without having passed through this phase, a person of fragile disposition fears every harmful company.

(d) If he were to experience this condition suddenly at the time of death, he would become distressed and die with various detestable thoughts. But if he went through this tribulation, he develops the strength to bear it. If he experiences it again at the time of death, he might become distressed but will not have evil thoughts about Allāh *taʿālā*. He will give his life out of love for Allāh *taʿālā*.

(e) This person becomes a master himself. It becomes easy for him to steer and guide others who are suffering in the same way.

(f) He sees Allāh's mercy on him all the time. He thinks to himself that he is receiving so many bounties from Allāh *taʿālā* despite being so unworthy.

(g) He personally sees the truth of the H̲adīth which says that forgiveness is not based on actions but on the mercy of Allāh *taʿālā*.

11. A cause of retraction

There are many reasons for retraction. One of them is when a person does more than what he can bear.

12. Retraction is superior to expansion

The spiritual masters consider retraction to be superior to expansion. Evil traits and characteristics are better treated through retraction. Almost all seekers experience this condition. They then get salvation from it and progress further.

13. Neither is burning love a sign of excellence nor is dryness an indication of imperfection

The burning enthusiasm and yearning which you consider to be an excellence is not so. The dryness and whisperings which you consider to be a blemish is not so.

14. Intentional and unintentional actions

Remember this general principle: You must not act against Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in actions which are within your choice. Thereafter, no matter what conditions you experience – since they are not of your choice – you must not bother in the least about them. Continue doing what you have to; you are not deprived. You yourself will establish the truth of this at some time in the future. For the time being, accept what I am saying. (quoted from a letter)

15. There are many benefits in retraction

This is that condition which is my heartfelt desire to be experienced by my associates provided it is accompanied with insight and fortitude. Its benefits are countless. There are many other benefits of this condition. The essence of all is

obliteration of one's self. The expansion which is experienced after it is also unparalleled.

16. Benefits are only realized later on

Although benefits are not realized at the exact time of retraction, most of them are learnt later on. Even if they are not learnt, they are certainly acquired. Acquisition is the objective and not knowledge of the acquisition. Don't worry at all. Do as much as you can even if you have to compel yourself and even if you have no interest in doing it. The spiritual practices which are burdensome may be reduced, but increase seeking forgiveness for as long as this condition remains. Continue informing me once or twice a week. Everyone experiences this condition. In fact, I get happy because it is a sign that you are traversing the path. These are all obstacles in the path. (quoted from a letter)

17. Witnessing the reality of servitude

These changes (changes in conditions) are natural and to do with the self. They are not spiritual and not related to the heart. So instead of being harmful, they are beneficial. A person is able to observe the reality of servitude in this condition. Self obliteration and humility are visually seen. It is worth looking at actions which are within one's control during such times, and they are tests. If you pass this test, you will be eligible for the highest marks.

18. The wisdom behind retraction and fear

A seeker becomes distressed when he looks around and finds that the path is closed to him from all sides. Whereas the underlying reason behind it is that Allāh *taʿālā* wants him to lose hope from all sides and to turn to Him alone. Sealing off this door is not meant to separate himself from Allāh *taʿālā*. Rather, Allāh *taʿālā* wants to rescue him from Satan and take him under His refuge. Allāh *taʿālā* puts the seeker through this constricted pass so that he may be protected against the internal destroyers of self-conceit and pride. Had he not been treated in this manner, he would have become trapped in the web of evils of the self and destroyed himself in the process.

19. Useful books

The following books of Hadrat Wālā must be studied:

(a) *Khātimah bi al-Khayr*
(b) *Al-Ibtilā' li Ahl al-Istifā'*
(c) *Khayr al-Akhbār fī Khabar al-Akhyār* (which has been printed towards the end of *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah).*
(d) *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik*, chapter five.

20. The reality of fear

Fear is really an unwitting turning of the self towards an evil.

21. Fear and worry are from among the lofty and blessed conditions. If you end in this way it will be the greatest form of martyrdom. However, the Sunnah demands that you make balance and moderation your fundamental basis for as long as your knowledge and strength can support you. Be conscious of affinity with fear, hope for mercy with worry and evil thoughts about one's self, continuity with obliteration, existence with non-existence, and observation of bounties with exaggeration in humility.

22. Read *Allāhummaghfhfirlī* excessively

When you experience excessive fears and evil thoughts about yourself then think that we are defective and sinners in every condition. Just as the true servants of Allāh *taʿālā* will receive salvation, the same will apply to those who repent. If we do not get the most prominent seat, we will at least get a place in the back where the shoes are placed. If we do not get the first prize, we can at least hope for salvation after being beaten. After understanding this, you must engage in excessive repetition of *Allāhummaghfirlī* (O Allāh forgive me). (quoted from a letter)

23. When you are overcome by retraction, you must study *Iksīr Hidāyat (Tarjumah Kīmiyā-e-Saʿādat*) or the chapter on hope for Allāh's mercy from the book *Thalāthīn (Tarjumah Arbaʿīn*). You must study these repeatedly.

24. Reprehensible conditions

There are two conditions which are reprehensible; sinning and heedlessness. As for overwhelming enthusiasm, this is a temporary condition and its absence is neither harmful to the seeker nor can it remain exactly as it is forever. The obstacles which you suspect are mere assertions and nothing else. You must remain occupied in your work with ease and comfort. The heart is certainly weakened by worry and this can be harmful. (quoted from a letter)

25. You are neither ill nor do you need treatment

You are neither ill nor do you need treatment. However, because you are not conversant in this field, you are not aware of your own health. Even this is not harmful. (quoted from a letter)

26. Different reasons for retractions

There are several reasons for it (retraction) and its treatment also varies. If you have not committed any sin and did not intermingle with outsiders, then the reason for it is that you are being put through a test. Resort to reliance on Allāh *taʿālā* and patience, and engage in seeking forgiveness. Study my *Mawāʿiẕ* and *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. Allāh's mercy will be showered on you.

27. Remain silent

Continue doing whatever is within your control. Do not be vexed by what is not in your control and do not make any plans for it. Just hand over the matter to Allāh *taʿālā* and remain silent.

28. Whisperings should not cause worry

Whisperings should not cause any worry. Worry weakens the heart and results in a double worry. The only thing to do in such a situation is to disregard the whisperings totally and to pay no attention to them. In fact, it will be better to be happy over them. This would strengthen the heart, It rejects the whisperings, and they are cut off very quickly. If there is no sin in them, why should you worry? Although natural pain and worry are not detestable – and are really signs of īmān – one must remain rationally unconcerned. In this way, the natural worry will wane and will not cause any grief.

29. A simple treatment for thoughts

A simple treatment for this is that when you are overwhelmed by such thoughts, you must wilfully direct yourself towards a good act and remain directed towards it. If, after this, the thoughts still remain or new thoughts come to your mind, then they are certainly beyond your will because two opposing thoughts cannot come together at one and the same time by your own will. Your confusion is thus removed. If you are wilfully neglectful in directing yourself towards good thoughts,

then be warned: neglect is atoned for through seeking forgiveness, and you must then be conscious of the above procedure. This procedure is extremely easy. There is no simpler procedure. Make it your practice and do not worry in the least.

30. Reward for fears

A seeker must neither be worried by detestable fears nor consider himself to be rejected [by Allāh *taʿālā*] because of them. These are whisperings which are cast by Satan in the heart. So what sin did he commit!? In fact, he will be rewarded for the harm which he is suffering because of his detestation.

31. No punishment for fears

In most cases, it is the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* that when a person attains total proximity with Him, whisperings come to an end. If, due to certain reasons and special wisdoms, they do not come to an end, the person must still not become worried because there is absolutely no punishment for unwitting whisperings and they are certainly not sins.

32. The make up of the heart

Allāh *taʿālā* has made the heart such that all types of thoughts – good and bad – enter it. No one has the right to demand only good thoughts to enter it, and to completely ban evil thoughts.

33. The place of fears

Fears do not occur within the heart itself but remain around it. As for what is thought to be within the heart, they are not whisperings but their effects and their reflections. The only thing which occurs within the heart is firmly-embedded belief, and not fear which is nothing but an assumed and superficial thing.

34. Fears – a sign of īmān

Satan only casts whisperings in a heart which has īmān.

35. A beneficial meditation

Hadrat Wālā emphatically states that it is immensely beneficial for a seeker to meditate over this: "Allāh *taʿālā* loves me." In fact, he goes to the extent of saying that even if your condition is not worthy of Allāh's love for you, then in accordance with the Hadīth Qudsī - I treat My servant according to his thoughts

about Me - you must have this good thought that Allāh *taʿālā* loves you.

36. Fears are only experienced by believers

Fears are only experienced by believers and accepted servants of Allāh *taʿālā*. They are not experienced by unbelievers and rejected ones.

37. Do not consider fears to be evil

Consider – rationally – evil whisperings to be evil, and never attach yourself to them by your choice. Never permit them to take the form of actions and deeds, neither at present nor in the future. Instead of being saddened by whisperings, consider them to be signs of īmān and be rationally satisfied and happy with them. Think to yourself: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, my beliefs are correct. Practise on the procedures outlined in point number 29. Be fully at ease with yourself and remain occupied in dhikr, acts of obedience, the essentials of Dīn and worldly essentials without giving any consideration to whether you have an inclination to carry them out or not. In fact, (as mentioned in point number 3), lawful worldly engagements should also be carried out because they also act as shields against evil whisperings.

38. A comprehensive treatment for whisperings

Whisperings are sometimes caused by fastidiousness and extreme perceptiveness. They are also caused by: medical conditions, evils of the self, Satanic influences, sins, and as a test from Allāh *taʿālā*. Sometimes more than one of these causes combine. In such a situation, when the cause cannot be identified, all treatments are brought together. However, in every situation, apart from specific treatments, the best treatment of all is not to pay any attention whatsoever to the whisperings and to abstain from delving into the whisperings and their causes.

39. The darkness of whisperings

Although whisperings cause a type of natural darkness, every darkness does not prevent one from traversing the journey when the means are correct. For example, a train also moves in the darkness by having its windows shut. As long as the train driver can see and he is on the line, this is enough.

40. A prerequisite for treatment

A prerequisite for these treatments to be beneficial is that they must never be done with the intention of treatments for the repulsing of whisperings and fears. Rather, they must be considered to be independent beneficial actions. At the same time, the person must not wait for the results, i.e. for the repulsing of whisperings to take place. If he waits for the results, it will result in hastiness, hastiness will cause a demand or pressing need, and this will result in apprehension. How can whisperings be repulsed in the presence of apprehension? Instead of waiting for the whisperings to be repulsed, a person must be totally prepared and think to himself: "Even if my entire life passes without salvation from whisperings, I am not bothered. I am going to continue doing what I have been ordered to do. I am not accountable for anything more." And in every condition and situation, firmly believe and be conscious of this fact and essential belief that Allāh *taʿālā* is the absolute controller and the all-wise Being.

Since Allāh *taʿālā* is the absolute controller, He does as He wills to His servants. No one has the right to object. Since He is the all-wise Being, we must be fully convinced that every action of His is based on absolute wisdom even though we may not know the details of this wisdom.

Clarification Of A Doubt

The themes which are contained in the booklet, *al-Ghaybah fī al-Haybah*, are from the writings and statements of Hadrat Wālā. Although they are the results of his independent investigations – after all, independent investigation is a prerequisite for a reformer in this field – it should not be misconstrued that he is unique in these investigations. Rather, they are supported by the independent investigations of past imāms in this field. The statements of Imām Qushayrī *rahimahullāh* (d. 465 A.H.) on these three objectives – explanation of events, explanation of wisdoms and explanation of treatments – are quoted here as examples. He writes:

لزوم ابتلاء عادةً: واعلم ان في هذه الحالة قلما يخلو المريد في أوان خلوته في ابتداء إرادته من الوساوس.

حكمة ابتلاء: وهذا من الإمتحانات التي تستقبل المريدين.

إشتداد ابتلاء: واعلم أنه يكون للمريدين على الخصوص بلايا من هذا الباب، وذلك أنهم أدخلوا في مواضع ذكرهم أو كانوا في مجالس سماع أو غير ذلك يهجس في نفوسهم ويخطر ببالهم أشياء منكرة يتحققون أن الله سبحانه منزه عن ذلك، وليس يعتريهم شبهة في أن ذلك باطل ولكن يدوم ذلك فيشتد تأذيهم به حتى يبلغ ذلك حدا شكون أصعب شتم وأقبح قول وأشنع خاطر بحيث لا يمكن المريد إجراء ذلك على اللسان وإبداؤه لأحد، وهذا أشد شيء يقع لهم.

علاج ابتلاء: فالواجب عند هذا ترك مبالاتهم بتلك الخواطر واستدامة الذكر والإبتهال إلى الله عز وجل باستدفاع ذلك وتلك والخواطر ليست من وساوس الشيطان، وإنما هي من هواجس النفس، فإذا قابلها العهد بترك المبالاة بها ينقطع ذلك عنه.

Tribulations are generally inevitable: You should know that rarely does a murīd not experience whisperings during his early days of solitude.

Wisdom: These are one of the tests which murīds have to encounter.

Severity of tribulations: You should know that the murīds specifically face tribulations in this regard. This is because they introduced in their places of dhikr, in their assemblies of samāʿ, etc. reprehensible matters which come to their minds and occur to them. They know that Allāh taʿālā *is pure from such matters and they have no doubt whatsoever about the falseness of such matters. However, these thoughts continue, thereby intensifying their distress and eventually causing them to complain about the worst of abuses, the most reprehensible statements and the most repugnant thoughts which the murīd cannot even utter or express. This is undoubtedly the severest condition which they experience.*

Treatment: When this happens, it is essential for them to disregard those fears, to continue in the remembrance of Allāh taʿālā *and to beseech Him to repulse them. These fears are not the whisperings of Satan but apprehensions of the self. When he combats them by disregarding them totally, they will be repulsed automatically.*

The quotation from *Qushayrīyyah* ends here. Although there is a difference in the length of explanation between Imām Qushayrī and Hadrat Wālā – the reason being the difference in the understanding and intelligence of the addressees, which a

speaker normally has to consider – the conformity in the independent investigation of a latter scholar [Hadrat Wālā] with that of a scholar of the past [Imām Qushayrī] is an accepted proof of the accuracy and acceptance of that investigation. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Apology: The subject matter of *al-Ghaybah fī al-Haybah* was most important and its discussions required much investigation. The reader must have gauged this. We were therefore forced to go into many details despite our efforts to be as brief as possible. Hadrat Wālā himself emphasised the need for conciseness repeatedly and removed many themes which were not intrinsically related to the subject. Despite this, the discussion became quite long.

Anyway, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, many facts and intricate points on Sufism came to light in the course of this discussion. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. The benefit and importance of this concise article can be gauged from the fact that when it was compiled, Hadrat Wālā remarked with absolute joy: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this article is unparalleled on this subject." He also expressed his wish for it to be printed separately. All praise is to Allāh *taʿālā*, this article contains rare investigations, intricate points, practical and rational treatments on the conditions of retraction, fears and whisperings. It is filled with all aspects of this subject. Even if it is printed separately, it will – Allāh willing – be most useful for the seekers and those treading the path of Sufism who by and large experience these conditions. Allāh willing, it will prove most beneficial to those who are suffering from fears and whisperings.

I myself have personally experienced the extreme benefit of it. Coincidentally, in the course of writing it I experienced a severe feeling of retraction which was brought about by an inundation of baseless fears. Hadrat Wālā referred to it as a good coincidence because I got a lot of help and ease from writing this article. Thereafter, through the blessings of recalling Hadrat Wālā's treatments, thinking about them, writing them down, and practising on them as per need resulted in this restrictive condition to disappear. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Furthermore, I learnt many beneficial and enlightening rational and practical principles with regard to conditions of this nature. I hope to be cognisant of them all the time and be

able to practise on them so that – Allāh willing – I will never have to experience such distress in the future. All matters are in Allāh’s control.

Hadrat Wālā’s treatments, viz. meditating with good thoughts about Allāh *taʿālā* and being rationally conscious of the correctness of one’s beliefs acted as elixirs for me. Both these treatments proved to be antidotes. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. May He bless me with steadfastness and keep me on the straight path forever through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

يا مقلب القلوب ثبت قلبي على دينك. اللّٰهُمَّ اهدني وسددني. اللّٰهُمَّ اعطني ايمانا لا يتردد، ويقينا ليس بعده كفر، ورحمة انال بها شرف كرامتك في الدنيا والآخرة. رب اعوذ بك من همزات الشيطان واعوذ بك رب ان يحضرون. ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد اذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمة، انك انت الوهاب. اللّٰهُمَّ ارنا الحق حقا وارزقنا اتباعه، وارنا الباطل باطلا وارزقنا اجتنابه. اللّٰهُمَّ اني اعوذ بك من الشك في الحق بعد اليقين، واعوذ بك من الشيطان الرجيم، واعوذ بك من شر يوم الدين، آمين ثم آمين، يا رب العالمين، بحرمة سيد المرسلين صلى الله عليه واله واصحابه اجمعين.

O Turner of hearts! Keep my heart firm on Your Dīn. O Allāh! Guide me and keep me steadfast. O Allāh! Bless me with īmān which does not waver, conviction which is not followed by unbelief, and mercy through which I can obtain the honour of Your generosity in this world and the Hereafter. O my Sustainer! I seek refuge in You from the whisperings of Satan and I seek refuge in You from their coming to me. O our Sustainer! Do not cause our hearts to deviate after You have guided us. Bestow on us mercy from Yourself. You alone are the Giver. Enable us to identify the truth as the truth and inspire us to follow it. Enable us to identify falsehood as falsehood and inspire us to keep away from it. O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from doubting the truth after being convinced about it. I seek refuge in You from the accursed Satan. I seek refuge in You from the evil of the Final Day. Āmīn. Āmīn. O Sustainer of the universe. Through the sanctity of the Chief of the Messengers sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. *Salutations to him, his family and all his Companions.*

This is just one small example of the benefit and blessings of Hadrat Wālā’s teachings. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep his shadow of affection with graces and blessings over the heads of the

Muslims for a long time to come with absolute wellness and peace. Āmīn.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I experienced another blessing in the course of writing this article, viz. I had the honour of seeing Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *quddisa sirruhu* in a dream. I said to Shāh Sāhib: "I am experiencing many whisperings from Satan. Pray for me that I receive perfect īmān." He said: "Your shaykh is a very senior shaykh. You are the murīd of Maulwī Ashraf ʿAlī." He added with reference to whisperings: "A train has to move in the darkness as well. It moves with its windows closed."

The interpretation of this dream is obvious. When I wrote to Hadrat Wālā and described the dream to him, he explained it as follows:

> Although whisperings cause a type of natural darkness, every darkness does not prevent one from traversing the journey when the means are correct. For example, a train also moves in the darkness by having its windows shut. As long as the train driver can see and he is on the line, this is enough.

This explanation of Hadrat Wālā is in itself a separate and fine investigation on the subject of fears. It ought to be borne in mind as a form of treatment.

Conclusion

All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for enabling an unworthy person like myself to complete this detailed explanation of Hadrat Wālā's most special lofty spiritual condition, viz. the overwhelming fear which he experienced. This was made possible through Hadrat Wālā's blessings, prayers, attention, corrections and guidelines. This also brings us to the end of the chapter on Pledge of Allegiance and Spiritual Abundance. Contrary to our expectations, this chapter ended very well.

After going through this entire volume, Hadrat Wālā addressed an unworthy person like myself with genuine affection and approval and said: "Māshā Allāh, you described all these conditions as though you were present with me at every step of the way." All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. My inspiration is solely from Allāh *taʿālā*. May He bestow me with a good end through the blessings of what I wrote. May He pardon me for

whatever mistakes and errors I committed in the course of writing this volume, may He crown it with the honour of acceptance, make it a source of goodness and blessings for the seekers and a means of atonement for my evil deeds and actions. Āmīn.

آمين ثم آمين، يا رب العالمين، بحرمة سيد المرسلين صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه أجمعين.

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات

The English translation of this, the first volume of *Ashraf as-Sawāni<u>h</u>* was completed on 04 Dhū al-<u>H</u>ijjah 1434 A.H. corresponding with 10 October 2013. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā.*

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

Mahomed Mahomedy
Durban, South Africa

SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTION

The Compiler Is At A Loss

I am confused as to how I should start the chapter and how I should end it. There are several reasons for my confusion:

1. This is the most important of all the chapters because its theme – spiritual instruction – is the soul of this biography and the essence and objective of Hadrat Wālā's life. It therefore needs special attention for which I neither have the time nor can it be expected from an ignorant, heedless, disorganized, lazy and easy-going person like myself.

2. It is most certainly not the job for an immature and useless person like myself to write about the spiritual instruction of a reviver of Dīn and Muslims, a lighthouse of instruction and a specialist physician who laid bare the centuries' old academic and practical errors, showed the straight path to the Muslim community, placed thousands of deviated ones onto the right path of Sufism and connected them to Allāh *taʿālā*.

3. Even if I were to compel myself into merely noting whatever I heard from Hadrat Wālā, read from his writings or heard from those who were associated with him, and just wrote them down in my own broken words without consideration to any special sequence, I would still be confused as to what I should write and to what extent. At present, I can say without exaggeration that the following scene comes before me:

> No matter where I look at from his head to toe, the pull of his beauty draws my heart towards him because this is the most beautiful place.

4. The biggest reason for my confusion is that the countless peculiar traits of Hadrat Wālā's spiritual instruction are quite well perceived by the heart and their effects are firmly embedded and preserved in the mind, but I do not find the words to express them and I cannot make others perceive them through words. A poet says:

> Although the artist may be able to capture the beauty of the beloved who has captured my heart, I am at a loss as to how he will portray her airs.
>
> It is not only the attraction of these airs and graceful ways, rather, people of beauty have thousands of beautiful ways which cannot be described.

Based on the above reasons, I feel that instead of writing something on this subject, I ought to address my self as follows:

> Break your pen and throw away the ink. Burn the paper and keep silent because your love story cannot be contained on pages.

I feel I should say to the reader:

> My heart knows and I know, and my heart knows.

And that I should merely write this one short sentence in this chapter: "The obvious needs no explanation" because Hadrat Wālā's method of spiritual instruction is visible to the entire world, is more brilliant than the sun, and which the world has recognized and acknowledged. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's many writings which are filled with his statements and teachings have been published and are well known in all places and lands. His associates and disciples are also spread out in large numbers in the East and West. Another spiritual master of his calibre is not visible anywhere else. This is an undeniable fact.

In short, I would have certainly acted on this natural demand of mine, but I have no alternative because if I were to do this, the essential subject matter of this biography would be left out. It is therefore essential for me to write something, even if it is incomplete and insufficient. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* addresses Hadrat Maulānā Husām ad-Dīn *rahimahullāh*:

> Your rank is beyond the comprehension of intellects.
> The intellect is useless in describing you.
>
> Although the intellect is useless in this regard, there has to be some effort in this regard – even if it is a weak effort.

As the Arabic saying goes:

ان شيئا كله لا يدرك – اعلموا ان كله لا يترك

If a matter cannot be fathomed in its entirety, it should at least not be given up totally.

A poet says:

> Although the storm of the clouds cannot be drunk, we cannot give up drinking water totally.
>
> Although sea water cannot be drawn, it ought to be drunk according to one's thirst.

Hadrat Wālā's Encouragement

When I presented these difficulties of mine to Hadrat Wālā, he said: "Just sit down and start writing whatever disjointed thoughts come to your mind. Allāh willing, the ideas will come automatically to you. Do not ponder and think too deeply. As long as you look at a river from a distance, it seems difficult to cross. Once you take the name of Allāh *taʿālā* and start walking, and reach the bank with the intention of crossing it – Allāh willing – you will see a ship there, a sailor to steer it, favourable winds and calm waves. In short, you will find all types of ease present before you and all obstacles removed."

Hadrat Wālā's encouraging glad tidings strengthened my weak courage. After hearing this blessed statement, I experienced strong hopes in the very world of despondency and felt that if I sit down to write, I will certainly be able to write something through Allāh's help and Hadrat Wālā's blessings and prayers. I therefore place my trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and commence writing whatever little I can and however I can on this subject. I am now closing my eyes and immersing myself in this shore-less ocean.

> We have cast our heart. It can only move and stop in Allāh's name.

May Allāh *taʿālā* help me and enable me to accomplish this task.

Completion Of Spiritual Abundance

The previous chapter, Pledge of Allegiance and Spiritual Abundance, was concluded on the subject of Hadrat Wālā's condition of retraction and fear. If we look at Hadrat Wālā's

conditions collectively, this was his last obstacle in the path of Sufism. By the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and the prayers and attention of the elders, Hadrat Wālā passed this valley and, so to say, traversed all the stages of spiritual abundance. Once he became fully perfect in this regard, he became – through Allāh's inspiration - forever engrossed in spiritual instruction with full force and vigour.

In short, after recovering from the above-mentioned condition, his period of spiritual abundance ended and his period of spiritual instruction commenced formally. This resulted in large numbers of seekers reverting to him, crowds of people assembled in the Khānqāh to engage in Allāh's remembrance, and Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī's wish which he had expressed on hearing about Hadrat Wālā's academic acumen was realized. He had said: "I will only be happy when some people who engage in Allāh's remembrance begin assembling there."

Maulānā Hakīm Mustafā's Dream

During this period, Hadrat Wālā's righteous student and senior khalīfah, Maulānā Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib Bijnaurī, saw a dream. It is quoted from *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā*:

> I saw a dream on 3 October 1901/Rajab 1319 A.H. when I was in Murādābād. This was during the early stages of Hadrat Wālā's living in the Khānqāh of Thānah Bhawan. I saw Hadrat Wālā delivering a lesson to students in the southern section of the Khānqāh in Thānah Bhawan. It was the time of tahajjud, the moon was out and there was a unique type of tranquillity. The time of tahajjud ended, the students completed their lesson and left the class to make preparations for salāh. The smell of musk was emanating from their mouths. I said: "A fortified supplement ought to be prepared for these students." Hadrat Wālā said: "The supplement of *mash-shā'īn* has been prepared for them." My eyes opened thereafter.

When the Maulānā wrote to Hadrat Wālā and related this dream to him, he wrote the following reply:

> As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. It is a very good dream. The fragrance is of knowledge and dhikr which the servants of Allāh

> *taʿālā* are occupied in here [in Thānah Bhawan]. The *mash-shā'īn* refers to those treading the path of Sufism. Walking (*mashy*) and treading are close in meaning. You saw yourself with them [students]. This is a great glad tiding for you. Was salām. That is all.

The dream was seen 35 years ago. The Hakīm Sāhib was very kind to search for the original letter which was written by Hadrat Wālā. He found it and sent it to me. It is in front of me at the moment.

Maulānā Anwār al-Hasan Kākaurwī's Dream

I recall another dream which was related to me quite some time ago by Maulānā Anwār al-Hasan Kākaurwī who is the son of the well-known ode-singer, Maulānā Muhsin Kākaurwī *rahimahullāh*. He related this dream to me in Thānah Bhawan. It clearly demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's rank in the field of spiritual instruction and abundance. I am therefore quoting it here as further support. The Maulānā said:

> During my hajj journey, I dreamt of Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī when I was in Madīnah Tayyibah. I had no special contact or link with Hadrat Maulānā at the time and my family too did not have much affinity with the genuine and true 'ulamā'. Yes, I did consider him to be a senior scholar. Hadrat Maulānā was not even in my remotest thoughts while I was in Madīnah Tayyibah. I dreamt that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was lying down on a straw mat. He was ill and Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī was nursing him. Another elderly person was sitting at a distance and I gauged in the dream itself that he was a doctor.

After relating this dream to me, the Maulānā added: "The moment my eyes opened, the interpretation which came to my mind was that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was not ill, rather it was his community and followers who were ill. And Hadrat Maulānā was nursing the Muslim community, i.e. rectifying and reforming it. But I could not work out who the elderly doctor who was sitting at a distance was. On my return to India, I described this dream in a letter and the interpretation which came to my mind, and sent the letter to

Hadrat Maulānā. I also mentioned the fact that I could not understand who the elderly doctor was who was sitting at a distance.” Hadrat Maulānā replied in his letter to me: “He is Hadrat Imām Mahdī *ʿalayhis salām*. Since the time for his arrival is still far, he was seen sitting at a distance.”

Three Dreams Of Maulānā Muhammad Hasan Amritsarī

Maulānā Muhammad Hasan Amritsarī is a very reliable scholar and from among the special associates and spiritual representatives of Hadrat Wālā. He saw three dreams which are of special merit. I feel I have to quote them from *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā*. All three are quoted in the Maulānā's own words.

First Dream

I went to Hadrat Wālā's Khānqāh for the first time in 1340 A.H. The first night or second night after my arrival I saw a dream in which the upper section of a grave was dug near the centre of the courtyard of the Khānqāh Musjid. The upper section of the grave was partially dug. A small tent was pitched over the grave. Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hadrat Hājī Shāh Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *quddisa sirruhu* was lying in the grave and appeared to be very weak. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib asked for water which was brought in an extremely beautiful flask whose neck and spout were very long and attractive. It was not made of clay but of some valuable gem stone. I never saw such a beautiful and attractive flask in my life. Hadrat sat up, and because the grave was not deep, his head and neck became visible. He now appeared to be quite strong. He drank the water and when I looked at the wall on the eastern side of the grave, I saw the following words written in a large font: “If you wish to gain the closeness of Allāh *taʿālā* then become like the dog of the road.”

In the dream itself I learnt that the “court” referred to the “court” of Hadrat Wālā where he was instructed to work. In the same dream, I saw Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* and Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *quddisa sirruhu* appearing from inside the Musjid. Their heads were bent towards each other as they were speaking privately with each other. They were making reference to Hadrat Wālā and saying that his views on the movement of opposition [to the British] were most correct. One

of them then went back into the Musjid while the other came out.

Second Dream

About three or four years ago I saw the following words written on the bathroom wall of the Khānqāh. The wall was becoming black with mildew, while the words were written with lime or some other very white ink. The words were: "The heart is washed here and also purified."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a comprehensive essence of Hadrat Wālā's method of spiritual instruction presented in such a fine theme from Allāh *taʿālā* in this dream.

Third Dream

I saw the Kaʿbah and the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the centre of the Khānqāh Musjid. The two were very close to each other. The Kaʿbah was most probably nearer to Hadrat Wālā's out sitting room. The blessed grave was in the shape of the Kaʿbah, i.e. without a dome. Both were covered with a beautiful green cover, the like of which I never saw. Rays of light seemed to emanate from them. Hadrat Wālā was standing near the Kaʿbah; I never saw him so happy and cheerful. He was holding a branch of a date palm which was formed into a broom and was about to go and sweep the area around the Kaʿbah and the blessed grave.

A Visual Experience Of Maulānā Hāfiz Muhammad 'Umar Alīgarhī

There are many other glad tidings of this nature which demonstrate Hadrat Wālā's high rank in the field of spiritual instruction. Some of them were related previously. I consider it appropriate to relate an exposition which was experienced by a Sufi in this regard.

Maulānā Hāfiz Jalīl Ahmad Sāhib is a Ra'īs from ʿAlīgarh. He is a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā and is presently in the permanent service of Hadrat Wālā. Maulānā Hāfiz Muhammad ʿUmar ʿAlīgarhī *rahimahullāh* was a senior Sufi and a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā. He relates that Hāfiz Sāhib *rahimahullāh* arrived by the night train to Thānah Bhawan. When the train passed in line with the Khānqāh, he saw a line of light extending from the dome of the Khānqāh Musjid to the heavens. He saw this in a state of wakefulness.

General Acceptance

These were incidental accounts in support of our actual objective. The actual objective of this chapter is to demonstrate that after Hadrat Wālā recovered from the conditions of retraction and fear, and perfected his spiritual abundance, the period of his spiritual instruction commenced with full force. Seekers began reverting to him in large numbers. The masses and the elite became so inclined towards him that he began receiving requests from far off places not only to deliver lectures but to merely visit them. Details in this regard were given in the chapter on sound admonition. Large numbers of those engaged in Allāh's remembrance used to join him on his journeys. The fascinating and charming sounds of dhikr makes one to experience the joy of the Khānqāh both on journeys and at home. I myself experienced this on several occasions and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Every lecture of Hadrat Wālā was like a complete lecture on Sufism through which the objective and the Sufi way would be made absolutely clear and a genuine quest would generally develop in the hearts of the people.

Hadrat Wālā Would Not Accept Bay'ah While On A Journey

Many people would request him to induct them in the spiritual family but Hadrat Wālā would generally refuse while on a journey by saying: "I want to teach practically that people must abstain from travelling Sufis." He used to say: "Faith in a person which is developed merely by listening to his lecture is not worthy of consideration because a lecture only contains good points. Yes, faith which is developed after observing daily actions and practices is worthy of consideration. And this can only be acquired after observing a person at his place of residence. Anyone who is desirous of pledging bayʿah to me must come to my hometown so that both sides are able to observe each other. Moreover, this will also be a test of a person's quest and thirst. In short, there must never be hastiness in the matter of bayʿah. It is not a transaction involving carrots and radish where the buyer hands over money and purchases an item."

Glory to Allāh! Look at his integrity and sincerity. Superficial Sufis are on the look out for disciples. In fact, they undertake journeys in order to trap people towards themselves. Look at

the correctness of Hadrat Wālā's criterion for faith and confidence in a shaykh.

Hadrat Wālā always says: "If a person comes here and hears my prerequisites for bayʿah, observes my method of rectification, and then departs without having achieved his objective, he will at least realize that bayʿah is not an ordinary matter. He will realize that it also has certain prerequisites. If he sees the opposite in any superficial Sufi, it will certainly cause a tremor in his heart. This realization in itself entails the fulfilment of a great objective."

Hadrat Wālā often quotes one part of a couplet composed by myself on such occasions:

> Even the one who is deprived in this house of love is not left deprived.

Consideration To The Sick And To Women

Hadrat Wālā was not in the habit of accepting bayʿah while on a journey but he used to accept the requests of women and sick people. Sick people deserve to be shown mercy, while women do not have opinions of their own. Their faith is simple, uncomplicated and genuine.

A Testimony From The Heart

In addition to women and sick people, Hadrat Wālā would not refuse the requests of those about whose genuineness he was convinced through their conditions and life situations. The secret behind this is that he was able to immediately perceive affinity or lack of it by virtue of his insight. There are countless astounding examples of this nature which we observe all the time. Hadrat Wālā says: "My heart immediately accepts some people and not others. If a person were to ask me the reason, I am never able to tell him. It has occurred to me on numerous occasions that a person looks like a drunkard, of fearless disposition, neither performs salāh nor keeps fast, is an open and flagrant sinner; yet my heart inclines towards him. On the other hand, you get a person who appears reliable, who is regular with his salāh and other devotional acts; but my heart does not incline towards him even if I try to. Now what can I do? My heart is not under my control, and it is deceitful to accept bayʿah when there is no inclination from the heart because the person cannot benefit from me in such a case.

Although I do not understand the reason for the inclination or disinclination of the heart at the time, in most of the cases I learn later on from incidents and conditions that the testimony of my heart was correct."

"The fact of the matter is that when Allāh *taʿālā* wants to take work from a person, He confers him with understanding of that work. It is not my personal excellence. Sometimes my heart lowers itself towards a person the moment I set my eyes on him and I spontaneously feel he must request me for bayʿah. Within a few days I see him personally coming to me and requesting bayʿah. I do not refuse such a person. The moment I hear his request, I accept it silently. I say to my heart: 'Do not say anything to him. Allāh *taʿālā* sent him to me in fulfilment of my wish.'"

Treating Each Person According To His Condition

I [the author] personally witnessed many incidents related to the correctness of the testimony of Hadrat Wālā's heart. There were occasions when Hadrat Wālā did not consider pity to be appropriate while I – by merely looking at the outward condition – requested pity for the person, personally showed pity to the person or expressed a lenient opinion. But later, my opinion proved to be totally wrong and my request was shown to be misplaced. Hadrat Wālā would say to me: "Look! You have now learnt that my opinion was correct. No one must interfere with my opinion when it comes to matters of rectification and training. When I treat a person in a particular manner, all my associates must realize that this treatment is most suited for him. Since Allāh *taʿālā* has entrusted me with this task, He guides and steers me. I myself am nothing; I am a nonentity."

Insight

After countless observations and experiences, I have reached the point of absolute certainty that whatever treatment Hadrat Wālā metes out to a person is most appropriate and conducive to that person. In fact, I have even witnessed him treating the same person in different ways on different occasions. This too proved to be most appropriate to the situation and really necessary for rectification. I experienced this quite often and it really astounded me. I was convinced that Hadrat Wālā was a man of divine expositions but he emphatically denies it. Anyway, these incidents certainly prove Hadrat Wālā's

receiving of divine help, his correct disposition and feelings, and the fact that he was an embodiment of the Hadīth:

اتقوا فراسة المؤمن فإنه ينظر بنور الله

Beware of the insight of a believer for he looks with the light of Allāh.

These virtues are far greater than divine expositions.

The Incident Of How I Pledged Bay'ah

The above themes were mentioned incidentally. What I was discussing previously was that Hadrat Wālā was not in the habit of accepting bayʿah while on a journey. But if he was satisfied and expected affinity from both sides, he would accept requests for bayʿah. I was fortunate to be one of those whose requests were accepted during his journey to Allāhābād in 1326 A.H. I feel it would be appropriate to relate it in some detail because other important points which are relevant to this chapter will also be learnt.

Interest In Hadrat Wālā's Writings

My father had pledged allegiance to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* through correspondence and, acting under his instruction, he learnt the Sufi way under Hadrat Wālā. Through the blessings of my respected and deceased father, I had an attachment for Dīn although I was occupied in studying western education. I had come across some of the writings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and Hadrat Wālā and was very much affected by them. As for Hadrat Wālā's writings, Allāh *taʿālā* had placed a peculiar attraction in them which caused my interest to study them to grow all the time. The quest for Dīn adhered to me and my condition began changing by the day. There are countless testimonies to this.

A Letter To Hadrat Wālā

I clearly recall how a few close friends and I had developed a strong interest in Hadrat Wālā's writings and even went to the extent of opening a library. The main advocate for this was Janāb Munshī Haqdād Khān Sāhib, a pensioner teacher at Patwāriyā. He is presently a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā, a very dedicated and blessed personality. The few of us got together and wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā in which we stated that we

learnt from his very own writings that when a person loves another, he must certainly inform him of it so that the latter would also reciprocate the love and remember the person in his prayers. This is why we are informing Hadrat Wālā that we love him.

Hadrat Wālā Comes To Allāhābād

All the above relates to before I could even meet Hadrat Wālā. I had completed my BA from ʿAlīgarh College and was studying law in Allāhābād College where I was admitted for LLB. I was living in the Kirah district at the time when I saw a printed poster announcing the lecture of Hadrat Wālā. I was so overcome by enthusiasm to see him that I walked for five miles in the intense afternoon heat and proceeded to the Madrasah which was attached to Musjid Shaykh ʿAbdullāh, near the large station where Hadrat Wālā was staying.

Hadrat Wālā was taking a siesta at the time. In my extreme love and enthusiasm for him, I remained standing at quite a distance and continued looking at him. Hadrat Wālā was sleeping with his back towards me, and his extremely beautiful glittering hair which was still totally black was displaying its beauty to me. In my efforts at trying to peek at him, I got a few glimpses of sections of his luminous face. My imagination and love for him caused his face to take on various attractive forms. Sometimes a particular form would appear before me, and sometimes another. I continued these repeated eager and searching glances but could not correctly ascertain what he looked like.

Hadrat Wālā was probably immersed in a dream at the time and I was immersed in looking at him with enthusiasm, yearning and love, and 28 years have passed since this incident, the entire scene in its exact form is still etched in my memory. The intoxicating effects of that incomplete view are still embedded in my heart. The simple and pure confidence and natural love of that time which did not even have any rational traces are still present in my mind. Although I was rationally consoled by Hadrat Wālā when he said that my present condition is better, more superior and more continuous than that first condition because rational conditions have a greater effect on the soul while natural conditions have an effect on the self, I am still desirous of that first condition. O Allāh! That was a time of real enthusiasm, yearning, simplicity

and sincerity. Allāh *taʿālā* has power over everything. I pray to Him to combine both rational and natural conditions to perfection in my heart. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Wālā says: "Although good, unwitting, natural conditions are praiseworthy, they are not the objectives. There is no harm in praying for such conditions, but it is a sign of insincerity to await such conditions. Furthermore, they are harmful because they cause a person to lose focus and turn him away from his objective." He adds: "Rational conditions are not totally devoid of natural emotions. A rational demand alone is generally not enough for the carrying out of actions. The opposite also holds true. However, rationality is overwhelming in one condition while natural instincts are overwhelmed. And the opposite occurs in the second condition." After mentioning these intricate facts and useful points about Sufism, I return to relating the incident concerning my bayʿah.

The First Verbal Exchange

I did not have to wait too long to speak to Hadrat Wālā because the time of zuhr salāh entered soon thereafter, Hadrat Wālā came out to perform ablution and I had the opportunity of seeing him on his way out. As was his noble habit, his gaze was down and he was swaying slightly as he was walking. He had a regal face but his clothes were those of a fakir. He was wearing a kurtah and a pants. The top button of his kurtah was open, as is his norm most of the time to this day. A scarf was draped over his shoulders. His eyes were stained with antimony, they appeared bloodshot and, because he had just woken up from his sleep, his hair was a bit dishevelled. In short, he had a unique and captivating appearance.

I went forward, offered salām and extended my hands in order to shake his hands. He looked up, replied to my salām in a lovely tone, shook my hands with his extremely soft and broad hand, and asked me in a most affectionate and pleasing tone, "How are you?" That pleasing tone still echoes in my ears, his demeanour is still embedded in my heart, and the place where I cast my first glance at him is still before me. As for his awesome gaze and the lightning-like effect which it had on me, do not even ask me about it because I cannot describe it. Try to understand it through the following couplet:

> You have wounded my chest in such a manner that you have left no traces of it there. I am astonished at how you could shoot an arrow without a bow.
>
> You conquered me with your flattering gaze while I was thoughtless. May I be sacrificed for your gaze. Cast your gaze at me one more time.

The First Gaze Of The Shaykh

I do not consider this to be a poetic exaggeration because – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – I am clearly perceiving the effects of his attentive gaze at every turn in my life from that first day to the present day. I am announcing with full confidence that anyone who wishes can personally experience the effect of his gaze as it had been experienced by thousands of other people. The following couplets apply:

> The entire world is intoxicated by looking at your beauty. I pray to Allāh that the evil eye does not afflict you. You made us drink an exotic drink for free.
>
> I am not the only prisoner of his hair-locks. Rather, there is a separate prisoner for each and every strand of his hair.

However, as per the teaching of Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*, the following prerequisite applies:

> Empty your brains from rejecting the Beloved so that you too can get the fragrance from the garden of the Beloved.
>
> Once you have held on to Him, you must become totally obedient. Become totally obedient as was the case with Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* with Hadrat Khidar *ʿalayhis salām*.
>
> Do not utter a word if he damages the ship. Do not make the slightest objection if he kills the child.
>
> After all, Allāh *taʿālā* referred to his [Rasūlullāh's] hand as His hand – in fact, He said that His hand is over their hands.
>
> Whatever that personality who receives revelation from Allāh *taʿālā* says is absolutely true.

> Lower your head before Him as was done by Hadrat Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām*. Give your life happily before His sword.
>
> Now that you have made him your shaykh, do not make your heart delicate. Do not become lazy and sluggish like mud.
>
> If you are going to become angry over every injury, how will your heart be purified without having to go through hardships and difficulties!?
>
> Since you do not have the strength to pierce with a needle, do not utter a word before such a brave lion.
>
> O brother! Be patient over the pain which you experience from the sting so that you can gain freedom from the stinging of your wicked self.

Hadrat Farīd ad-Dīn ʿAttār *rahimahullāh* conveys it as follows:

> O Farīd! Become true on the path of Sufism so that you may obtain the key to the treasures of recognition [of Allāh *taʿālā*].
>
> O you who are searching for the path. Hold on to a guide and sacrifice whatever you have in this path.
>
> Consider your shaykh to be the absolute king so that you may recognize the truth in the path of Sufism.
>
> Become obedient to whatever he says and fill your eyes [opinions and views] with soil.
>
> Listen attentively to whatever he says so that he does not have to order you to remain silent.

Depending on the various capabilities and inclinations, the effect of Hadrat Wālā's attentive gaze will be perceived immediately or changes and progress in one's external and internal conditions will certainly be observed as time passes. Allāh willing, the person will eventually sing out these couplets either verbally or by his condition:

> May Allāh *taʿālā* reward you for having opened my eyes and making me aware of my Beloved.
>
> You freed me from the evil of my self when you made me drink continuously from the goblet.

حماك الله عن شر النوائب، جزاك الله في الدارين خيرا

May Allāh taʿālā *protect you from the vicissitudes of time. May Allāh* taʿālā *give you the best of rewards in both worlds.*

The Spiritual Miracles Of The Shaykh

Hadrat Wālā constantly says this with absolute confidence: "The seeker who remains engrossed in his task constantly observes the spiritual miracles of his shaykh within himself. Therefore he has no real desire to witness the external miracles of his shaykh. If he does not witness these internal miracles even after a long time, he must search for another shaykh because this is proof that he has no affinity with his present shaykh."

Hadrat Wālā also says: "When sitting in your shaykh's assembly, you must direct your attention towards his heart even if he is occupied in some other task. You must then imagine that light is being transferred from his heart to your heart." He said on another occasion: "I do not impose on those sitting in my assembly to even pass me a note of a person who is sitting at a distance or to pass my note to such a person, unless if it is absolutely necessary. The reason why I abstain from doing this is that some people want to sit here with absolute and total focus and attention. Asking them to pass such notes affects their concentration and weighs heavily on their hearts. I know those who are of such a disposition and who sit so engrossed." He added: "I am also of the same temperament, but what can I do, I have to speak for the sake of those who are present in the assembly and those who have some need."

On one occasion he said with regard to the common assemblies of concentration: "What is the need for an assembly of concentration in a place where there is concentration all the time?"

He said with regard to a certain matter: "Here we only teach how to connect [with Allāh *taʿālā*]; we do not know what this Sufism is. We are students, we do not even possess knowledge. All we do is teach how to practise on the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Thereafter, whoever is to receive anything in this way receives it. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, when he receives it, it is something which no eye beheld, no ear heard of and no human

heart ever imagined. Outwardly it is nothing – there is no ecstasy, no fervour, no exposition and no miracle. I occasionally snap my little girl's knuckles, and I tell her to pinch my cheeks. Now look at this, is it the action of a Sufi? When we went on hajj, my father purchased fish which was caught from the sea. I thought to myself that it must have salt in its flesh, so it should be cooked without salt. Subsequently, it was cooked without any salt and was cooked very well. Although no salt was added, there was a suitable amount of salt in it. In the same way, the "salt" over here [in the Khānqāh] is not added from the top. It is inside and displays its saltiness after it is cooked. Only the person who eats perceives the saltiness. Similarly, a person who has never eaten a mango in his life cannot be made to understand its taste through mere explanations and similes. Its taste can only be perceived after it is eaten."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the fine manner in which Hadrat Wālā explained the crux of his unique methodology which is exactly in line with the Sunnah way. The erudite reader must have also ascertained Hadrat Wālā's power of beneficence and rank of instruction and training. This is the essential theme of the present chapter. The reader must have also gauged the extent of goodness which a person derives from Hadrat Wālā's company. Glory to Allāh! This is Sufism in its fundamental form which is totally in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and which the erudite Sufis of every era possessed, practised on and propagated. However, the explanation, generality and clarity with which it has proliferated in the present era through Hadrat Wālā was not realized for centuries before this. Countless astonishing and unique points, very beneficial and effective methods of training and rectification, and extremely simple and effective treatments for spiritual ailments which have been compiled and published in large numbers all bear just testimony to the fact that Hadrat Wālā is not just a Mujaddid but a very distinguished Mujaddid, and a super specialist physician of the Muslim community. This is the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

Inspiring Gaze

All the above concerned the effect of Hadrat Wālā's inspiring gaze. A few incidents in this regard have come to my mind, so they are related briefly to serve as examples.

A man from Sītāpūr District spoke in praise of Hadrat Wālā's gaze in his own rustic language: "It is a very killing gaze." Another man from Khaurjah said: "Hadrat Wālā had looked at me just once a very long time ago. That gaze is embedded in my heart like a nail." Janāb Sufi Sulaymān Sāhib Lājpaurī *rahimahullāh* was an elderly and well-known Sufi shaykh of Gujarat. He met Hadrat Wālā by coincidence and it was a short incidental meeting. After meeting him, he went into a musjid, sat down and continued crying for a few hours. When he was asked the reason, he mentioned the name of Hadrat Wālā and said: "I do not know what he did to me with his eyes." This incident was related in detail under the chapter concerning Hadrat Wālā's meeting pious personalities and receiving their prayers.

During one of Hadrat Wālā's lectures in Kānpūr, my deceased brother happened to be sitting directly in front of Hadrat Wālā. Consequently, his gaze fell quite often on my brother's face in the course of his lecture. I noticed my brother regarding Hadrat Wālā with a fixed look and listening attentively to whatever he was saying. I realized that Hadrat Wālā's focus was on my brother, and thought to myself that – Allāh willing – its effect will certainly become manifest. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, it happened as I assumed. My brother was so much affected by Hadrat Wālā that he reverted to him and became extremely religious despite holding a high worldly position. He was occupied in Allāh's remembrance and left this world while reading the kalimah. A few other incidents with regard to the effects of Hadrat Wālā's lectures were related in the chapter concerning his sound admonition.

The Shaykh's Focus

Janāb Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī is a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā and a teacher at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. I personally saw him sitting close to Hadrat Wālā in one of the latter's assemblies and becoming startled on several occasions from Hadrat Wālā's address. After the assembly, I

quoted to him a couplet which described Hadrat Wālā's lightning gaze.

> With his eyes he filled my veins and nerves with lightning. His gaze is like a sign of lightning.

In the beginning, I myself used to be affected to the extent that sometimes I would place my hand on my heart and – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – even now it removes my heedlessness and creates a union with Allāh *taʿālā*. If I were to maintain this continuously, I would eventually acquire the eternal treasure of affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*.

The Blessing Of Companionship

I am convinced that the blessing which is acquired from a shaykh's companionship is in most cases acquired through his focus and attention. In fact, even without his focus, the reflection of his affinity continually falls on the hearts of his disciples. Through this, heedlessness is removed and they begin to perceive the feelings of union with Allāh *taʿālā*. This results in abundance of dhikr and continuity in obedience which result in a daily progress in union and presence with Allāh *taʿālā*. Eventually, through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessing of the shaykh, firmly-embedded affinity which is the sum total of all the forms of dhikr, spiritual exercises and striving, is achieved. The seekers must therefore monitor their hearts all the time. If they do this, they will certainly perceive the focus and blessings of the shaykh within themselves. This will continually receive strength through abundant dhikr and continuous obedience, until firmness in it is achieved.

I see myself going towards heedlessness but through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's focus, my heart directs me towards Allāh *taʿālā*. It seems as if an awakener is sitting inside my heart [to wake me up whenever I become heedless]. May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow me with the inspiration to protect myself from heedlessness. There is no shortage in His treasures, it is I who has shortcomings. I just remembered a statement of Hadrat Wālā. On one occasion, I said to him with absolute regret: "Hadrat, when I present myself before you, the condition of my heart is excellent. But when I leave here, it deteriorates gradually." He consoled me immediately with genuine affection by saying: "So what is the problem? When you make your

clothes dirty, the washer-man washes them clean. When you make them dirty again, he washes them again.”

In short, there are thousands of incidents portraying Hadrat Wālā’s alchemic gaze, the essence of which can be expressed in the following metaphor: He turned thousands of pebbles into sapphires, and countless rocks into *pāras*[1]and thereby made them manifestations of the following couplet:

> The moment steel touches the *pāras*, it takes the form of gold there and then.

The Prescribed Method Of Focus

When I observe the effects of Hadrat Wālā’s piercing gaze, I am convinced that he certainly makes the intention of his effect falling on the other person and that the conditions of his heart are conveyed to him – only then can his focus be so effective. In fact, I felt that he remains focused with his heart all the time towards the seekers because in most cases – while in his presence or in his absence – they suddenly perceive unique conditions without any external causes. However, Hadrat Wālā frankly stated the error of my feelings and said: “I do not have time to worry about my own self, how will I be able to turn my focus to others all the time?! I consider the well-known focussing to be a formality and deliver talks against it. I consider it to be permissible if it is done with the intention of benefiting others. It was on this basis that focussing one’s attention on another had been the practice of some of our elders. However, the manner in which it has become prevalent is not found in the Sunnah way.”

“Although I consider the well-known focussing to be permissible, I have a natural aversion for it – like the aversion for the stomach of an animal, although it is lawful to eat, some people cannot get themselves to eat it. I feel ashamed to turn my focus from everything else and direct it all the time to just one person who is a creation [of Allāh *taʿālā*] because this right is specifically the prerogative of Allāh *taʿālā* – we have to turn our attention from everything and everyone and direct it solely towards Him. However, to teach the seekers with pain and concern, and to have a heartfelt desire that they benefit and

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[1] The philosopher’s stone which according to Hindu legend immediately converts into gold any metal it touches.

their religious condition comes right – this is the prescribed way which has been the Sunnah of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. This method is far more beneficial and blessed than the well-known method of directing one's focus. There is permanence in the prescribed method while the effect of the well-known method remains only for that time and is then non-existent. This is similar to a person sitting near an oven. As long as he remains there, his body remains warm. The moment he moves away slightly and the cold wind gets him, his body becomes cold. As for the prescribed method of directing one's focus, its example is like that of a person who applies an ointment of arsenic which increases his innate body temperature. Even if such a person were to go onto the Shimlah Mountain, his body heat will remain the same."

Hadrat Wālā then said: "Do not have the doubt as to how a focus can be effective if it is not pre-intended. The fact of the matter is that Allāh *taʿālā* placed the element of conveyance in some hearts. For example, although the sun does not intend for its light to reach others, it still reaches them because Allāh *taʿālā* placed this quality in it that whatever comes in front of it is illuminated by it."

Glory to Allāh! This is an even greater excellence of Hadrat Wālā that his blessings reach others without intending it. It is a sign of his strong affiliation with Allāh *taʿālā*, his blessedness and his acceptance in Allāh's sight. The following couplet applies fully to Hadrat Wālā's denial of directing his focus on others and the seekers' perceiving the effects of his focus:

> O my beloved! I pray to Allāh that the evil eye does not afflict you. I take an oath by your head, I saw a certain expression of yours on a certain day which you yourself may have not seen.

First Companionship

After relating this unique explanation of Hadrat Wālā, I return once again to the story of my bayʿah. I was describing my first meeting with him. I introduced myself briefly after shaking hands with him. He got busy in preparing for the salāh, and after the zuhr salāh, he sat in his assembly and illuminated the audience with his words of wisdom. People came in droves upon droves and sat down after having the honour of seeing him and shaking hands with him. Eventually a large group of

people had assembled. In my extreme enthusiasm, I sat very close to Hadrat Wālā.

The Effect Of Hadrat Wālā's Companionship

Hadrat Wālā's blessed companionship and wise words had such a deep impact that no matter what he said, it would descend into my heart and embed itself in my mind. When he happened to look at me, a type of lightning would flash in my heart. Subsequently I became so used to him that I began spending most of my time in his service. I used to even spend most of my nights there, and sleep on the musjid or madrasah straw mats without any bedding or pillow. In short, I became intensely attached to Hadrat Wālā. He spent only two or three days in Allāhābād because he had to journey further and then spend two or three days again on his return trip. However, I was so much affected by remaining with him for these two or three days that it was as if every action of his had seeped into me to the extent if I were to speak to anyone after his departure or quote any of his statements – many of which I had memorized automatically – to my friends, I would unwittingly develop some similarity to his manner and tone of speech. In fact, I even perceived a similarity to his manner of walking and other physical actions. This clearly shows the strong and swift effect of Hadrat Wālā's influence. Moreover, on observing how beloved he was in the sight of people and the general effect which he had on everyone, I would spontaneously picture the Chief of the Messengers, the Beloved of Allāh, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. On observing his intellectual erudition and powerful manner of providing proofs, I perceived a strong force in Islam as opposed to the Englishmen, atheists and people of other faiths. This strengthened my heart and I thought to myself that – through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – no one has the audacity to point a figure at the truthfulness of Islam in the presence of Hadrat Wālā. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* this is an absolute fact.

Hadrat Wālā's Affection

All these early impressions are still firmly embedded in my heart and mind and have been related without really missing out anything. My latter conditions are details of this brief description. During this time I took the bold step of requesting him to pray for me. He responded immediately by saying: "May

Allāh *taʿālā* make you His lover and beloved." It was also during the same time or at a later stage when he said the following words with genuine affection and kindness: "I am speaking the truth when I say that my heart has a special bond with you."

I requested to him on one occasion: "Hadrat, pray that my heart does not even have any inclination towards sin." He replied: "What is the benefit of becoming a wall?" He then pointed to a wall and said: "Look at this wall: It does not steal, it does not commit adultery, it is very pious. Despite this, the poor thing is still a wall and nothing else. It does not receive any reward whatsoever. The excellence of man lies in experiencing an inclination to sin, but he restrains himself and does not allow himself to commit a sin."

The Obstacle To Bay'ah Is Removed

I then said to Hadrat Wālā: "Hadrat, I really want to pledge bayʿah but I cannot sum up the courage because if I continue sinning after having pledged allegiance to you, there will be no benefit in such a pledge. I request Hadrat to first purify my impure hands so that I can place them in Hadrat's pure hands." I become overjoyed when I think about this because – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – my approach to the concept of bayʿah was in accordance with Hadrat Wālā's from the very beginning. Hadrat Wālā was standing at the time and performing ablution. A water can was placed on the ridge of a wall.

Hadrat Wālā related an example to the statement which I made above. He said: There was an impure and dirty man who went to a river. The river said to him: "Come to me, come to me." He replied: "How can I come to you when you are so pure and clean, while I am absolutely impure and dirty?" The river replied: "If you cannot come to me in such a condition, you will never be able to purify and cleanse yourself without coming into me and washing yourself. In such a case you will remain away from me forever. O brother! This is the procedure for purifying yourself. Just close your eyes and dive into me without delving too much into the matter. Once you dive in, a wave from within me will rise up immediately, pass over your head, wash away all your impurities there and then, and make you pure and clean from head to toe."

A Spiritual Practice For Allāh's Love

Later, when I requested Hadrat Wālā to pray that I get Allāh's love, he instructed me to repeat Allāh's name 3 000 times after the fajr salāh in a slightly audible voice, with a slight beating of the head while imagining to myself that my heart is joining me in this dhikr. He demonstrated the method of this dhikr by doing it a few times before me. Hadrat Wālā then proceeded on his journey from Allāhābād and most probably went to A'zam Garh. As per his promise, he returned to Allāhābād after some time and stayed over again for a few days.

A Dhikr As Taught By Hadrat Wālā

In the meantime, I continued with the dhikr which Hadrat Wālā taught me and I developed a lot of enthusiasm in carrying it out. On his return, I mentioned my enthusiasm to him and added: "Previously I did not even perceive that I had a heart by my side. But I have started perceiving it now." The type, amount and time of dhikr which Hadrat Wālā had prescribed to me on the first day proved to be so appropriate and suitable to a person like me who is always looking for comfort, who is weak in his courage and who is quite heedless that if I were to make the slightest change in it, it would result in a deficiency and agitation in me. Hadrat Wālā's prescriptions almost always prove to be most appropriate to a person's conditions. He himself used to say in support of this: "I prescribed only recitation of the Qur'ān for Dr. 'Abd ar-Rahīm Sāhib Lucknowī. He was overjoyed by this and said: 'You asked me to do something which is totally in accordance with my temperament. I am most attached to recitation of the Qur'ān.'"

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "I did not even know about his enthusiasm. However, the thought came to my heart that instead of instructing him to engage in dhikr, it would be more suitable for him to engage in recitation of the Qur'ān. In the same way, I prescribed excessive optional salāhs for a particular person and he too said the same thing to me."

Hadrat Wālā pays due consideration to the enthusiasm of the seekers when instructing them to carry out spiritual practices and different forms of dhikr. When a person is attached to a particular form of dhikr, it becomes easy for him to be regular and punctual with it. He also remains focussed and experiences more concentration both of which help him further

and are also the objectives. Before instructing a seeker to carry out certain forms of dhikr, he asks him about the present forms which he engages in. He then increases or decreases its amount and prescribes it to him. He explains the reason for doing this: “A person develops affinity with his old spiritual practices and his heart does not want to give them up. Furthermore, he is more enthusiastic about carrying them out. This is why I do not ask him to give them up unnecessarily. In addition to this, because there is continuity with his old spiritual practices, it develops special blessings for him.”

Blessings In Spiritual Practices

After practising on the prescribed practices of Hadrat Wālā, a person perceives so much of blessings which he never perceived before. This is a clear indication of Hadrat Wālā’s acceptance, blessings and power of conveying benefit to others. This is the grace of Allāh *ta‘ālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

The Request For Bay’ah Is Accepted

I was so drawn towards Hadrat Wālā that when he returned to Allāhābād, I requested him to accept my bay‘ah. He said: “I am not refusing, but why are you cutting down your respect and dignity unnecessarily? The respect which I have in my heart for you will certainly be reduced after you pledge allegiance to me.” Anyway, before Hadrat Wālā could depart, he accepted the bay‘ah of Munshī Haqdād Khān Sāhib, the host [where Hadrat Wālā was staying] and myself.

Permission To Take A Job

Hadrat Wālā most probably proceeded to Kānpūr from Allāhābād. I too reached there after some time. I saw Hadrat Wālā sitting in meditation in one corner of the Jāmi‘ Musjid of Tipkāpūr district. Those were the early days of my enthusiasm and fervour, so when I saw him sitting in meditation like this, I addressed myself or my friends and quoted this couplet:

> He is sitting with his gaze down and his neck lowered. This is the one who has stolen my heart.

I was in search of a job during those days, and there were a few posts for inspectors in a distillery. I had sent in an application for these posts. When I asked Hadrat Wālā about the

permissibility or non-permissibility of this job, he said: "First find out from what the drinks are made." When I enquired, I learnt that they were made from molasses, *mahwā*[1] and other sources. It is not made from grapes or dates. Hadrat Wālā said: "The short answer to your question is that you must try to get this job. And if you want to know why I said this, you must write your question and send it to me by post to Thānah Bhawan. Allāh willing, I will provide you with detailed reasons." When Hadrat Wālā finds any leeway from the statements of any of the erudite jurists for the permissibility of any type of employment, he issues a ruling of permissibility based on the leeway given by the jurists and due to these times of general tribulation and weak inclination. This is because constricted livelihoods are far more detrimental and harmful.

In short, my application was accepted and I was sent to Shāh Jahānpūr for a fifteen-day training programme.

Hadrat Wālā's Encouragement

My father – may Allāh *taʿālā* give him the highest stages in Paradise – wrote to me and asked me to leave the job immediately. I then tried to get a job as a deputy collector. By Allāh's grace and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's prayers, my application was successful. However, because I had become so attached to dhikr and other spiritual practices by virtue of Hadrat Wālā's benediction, I could not get myself to study the books for the examination and I had become disinclined from the world. I could not pass the examinations which I had to pass for confirmation of the job. I was given one more special chance. I wrote to Hadrat Wālā about my confusion and informed him that I had no hope of passing because my heart was not inclined at all to studying. Hadrat Wālā sent a very encouraging and heartening reply. He wrote: "Do not lose courage. Although you may be naturally disinclined, impose on your heart to concentrate and make sure you pass the examinations. Do not even allow any worry to come near you."

> It is most unfortunate when even an intelligent person's heart becomes worried and restless.

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[1] A tree bearing sweet flowers from which spirituous liquor is distilled.

Hadrat Wālā continues: "You must most certainly pass the examinations so that you are not humiliated before worldly people. You must give up this dead world after having acquired it. You must become one who abandons this world, not one who is abandoned by it. If you do not pass the examinations and are removed from your post, you will not be leaving the job of deputy collector, rather it will be casting you aside. Whereas you ought to be doing the opposite."

Preparation For The Examinations

After receiving these encouraging words from Hadrat Wālā, I took special leave to prepare for the examinations. I then went to a relative who was a deputy collector and lived near a mountain, sought his help and began my preparations. Even then, I could not prepare myself sufficiently. However, I had to fulfil Hadrat Wālā's wishes. From that very year, the authorities began permitting open-book testing. All praise is due to Allāh, this made the task easier. Despite this, it was of no use to consult the text books on certain topics, and I feared that I might fail.

I recall very well that after completing the exams in Lucknow and proceeding to Thānah Bhawan, I related to Hadrat Wālā that in the course of my preparations and even while writing my examinations, I was so concerned and worried that I could not enjoy in the least the beautiful sceneries of the mountain area and of the beautiful city of Lucknow. Only after I completed the examinations was I able to look at the earth and skies, and then I realized that I was living in this world. On hearing this, Hadrat Wālā first responded with an "Ah" which was filled with emotion. He added: "In the same way, the person who is worried about the examination of the Hereafter does not see this earth and the skies."

I was quite convinced at the time that Hadrat Wālā was relating his own condition.

Hadrat Wālā's Glad-tidings

After a certain salāh, Hadrat Wālā lied down in the musjid it itself in order to straighten his back while I began pressing his legs. When he just fell asleep, I got up to do some work. He called for me immediately and said: "I just saw a dream now. Although there is a possibility of disgrace by saying it before

hand, but what can I do and of what worth is my dream! I am therefore relating it to you. It was a very detailed and long dream and I do not remember it in its entirety. I only remember the gist of it. Someone came and informed me that you passed the examinations for the post of deputy collector. Although there was no hope of your passing in one particular subject, but you got good marks in it as well." By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I passed all the subjects and, through the wishes and prayers of Hadrat Wālā, I was appointed as a deputy collector.

My Own Dream

I too saw a dream during the same period. A baby snake passed by me and I killed it with some object. It died with just one strike. I then saw another poisonous creature which I cannot remember what it was at present. It came towards me and I killed it with two strikes. I was then shown a scorpion. When I struck it, it became lame and climbed the wall in that lame state. It seemed as if it fell on my duvet and I feared that it would bite me. I got up with a fright. I think it referred to the same subject which Hadrat Wālā had seen in his dream and regarding which he said that there was no hope of passing one subject but I got good marks in it as well.

Success In My Employment

After relating his dream to me, Hadrat Wālā said: "I also want you to pass. Once you pass, you will have the choice of continuing in that field or giving it up." I asked him on countless occasions to permit me to give up my job but he never advised me against it. He would quote this couplet most of the time:

> Now that he has appointed you, you must remain bound to it. Once he opens and frees you, you can become energetic and fully aware.

He eventually advised me to change the court in which I was working. This will be mentioned in the next few lines. I think it was also during this period that Hadrat Wālā replied to one of my letters by saying: "Allāh willing, you will acquire success in both worlds. My heart testifies to this."

Changing My Employment

By virtue of Hadrat Wālā's prayers and wishes, I remained in this job for seven years and then resigned from it after obtaining his permission. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, instead of being discarded by the world, I witnessed an example of discarding the world. The background to my leaving this job was that I had to make many decisions which were against the Sharīʿah. I used to experience a lot of constriction in this regard. Although I constantly asked Hadrat Wālā the rules and regulations in order to save myself from passing decisions against the pure Sharīʿah, I could not save myself completely. The following couplet applies:

> You tied me to a plank and let me loose on the river.
> You are now telling me to be careful I do not get wet.

I repeatedly expressed my doubts to Hadrat Wālā about working as a deputy collector and complained to him about it. He eventually advised me to try to get a job in the education department. I personally spoke to several seniors in this regard and wrote a formal letter expressing my desire to work in the education department. I also added that I was prepared to accept a pay which was less than what I was receiving at present. However, I was not successful in this regard and received a clear reply that there is no available post for me in the education department. I lost all hope and, after serving as a deputy collector in Fatahpūr, I took leave to go to Makkah and Madīnah. On my return, I was appointed to work in Kānpūr. Incidentally, Hadrat Wālā was on a journey and had stopped over in Kānpūr. When I related to him my despair as regards getting a job in the education department, he said with full force and confidence: "Do not lose hope. Continue trying. My heart is inclined to think that – Allāh willing – a better situation will develop in your favour." I renewed my efforts and expressly stated to my seniors that I was prepared to accept a very low wage.

Through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's prayers, the testimony of his heart and my reliance on Allāh *taʿālā* an entirely new situation presented itself. The government approved plans for special Urdu schools to be opened for Muslims and for the appointment of a Muslim deputy inspector for each commissionary. I received a formal notice informing me about the availability of this post, a monthly salary of 150 rupees,

and if I was prepared to accept the job or not. Although this was the highest pay for this post, it was only half of what I was receiving as a deputy collector. When I wrote to Hadrat Wālā and expressed my hesitation because of the low salary, he replied: "It is not my habit to advise on these issues, but if I was in your place, I would certainly accept it even if the salary was less than that [150 rupees]. I would not allow this opportunity to pass." Hadrat Wālā added: "If you are still hesitant, you must not complain to me about the evils of your current job."

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the little hesitation which I had was removed through Hadrat Wālā's statement and I accepted the post very eagerly and enthusiastically. My services were now directed to the education department. Allāh *taʿālā* was most kind to me in the sense that I was gradually promoted to higher posts and my salary also increased over time. All praise is due to Allāh, it continues to this day. I had got the post of deputy collector soon after pledging bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā. I clearly recall asking him to pray that I get the job so that – Allāh willing – I will be able to occupy myself in dhikr and spiritual practices without any worry. I did not know that the job for which I had repeatedly asked Hadrat Wālā to pray for me would eventually lead me to repeatedly ask him to pray that I am able to leave it.

Practising On Dīn

After having the honour of pledging bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā, through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's prayers and focus, I developed an intense awareness to practising on Dīn. I clearly remember that when I had to go to Lucknow on one occasion and I passed through the market, I ensured that my gaze was fully lowered and constantly pinched my side so that my gaze does not fall on the women there and I do not turn my attention to their singing which was heard from all sides. Similarly, I was travelling on a horse-carriage in Allāhābād when I happened to come upon the noise and clamour of Muharram celebrations on the way. I turned my attention away from the music and concentrated on the awful sound made by the horse-carriage. I addressed my self saying: "The awful sound of these wheels is far better than the pleasant sound of the drums because listening to the latter is sinful while listening to the former is not."

In the course of my rounds as a deputy collector, I had emphasised on all my family members never to purchase anything which was cheaper than the market rate. When I found it difficult to be cautious about timber – because it generally does not have a price in the rural areas – I asked Hadrat Wālā about what I should do in this regard. He wrote back: "Incidentally I have a person who is knowledgeable on these issues sitting right here with me. He says that it can be obtained at a price from a carpenter." In the course of my rounds, there were several Muslims who, despite their old age, had never performed salāh throughout their lives. In fact, they had not even learnt how to perform it. They soon became regular and punctual in performing salāh. There were many others who used to shave or trim their beards but began keeping a full beard. In order to encourage them further, I used to say to them: "You broke your habit and started keeping a beard after I told you. If you say, I will break my habit and shave off my head." But they would not ask me to do that. I used to emphatically prohibit them from accepting bribes.

A Manager Repents

I recall one of my managers in Kānpūr who was about to be pensioned. He used to accompany me to the court musjid for the zuhr salāh. I said to him on one occasion: "Khān Sāhib! You are to be pensioned very soon and obviously you will no longer be able to accept any bribes. After you are pensioned, you will probably repent for accepting bribes. But at that time, your repentance will be under compulsion and just verbal; it will not be practical. How much time is there before you are pensioned? It is just a few months. If you give up accepting bribes now and repent completely, you would have also achieved practical repentance."

He was so affected by what I said that he repented there and then in the musjid, gave up accepting bribes completely and became a truly repentant person. All the people in the court were astonished. In fact, some people assumed that he is refusing to accept bribes because he is being offered too little. So they offered him large sums but he refused. He pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā later on and lived a religious life until his very end. May Allāh *taʿālā* forgive him.

Humility

Through Hadrat Wālā's blessings, I had developed so much humility within me that despite holding such a high position in the court, I did not consider it below my dignity to eat with my peon. But Hadrat Wālā had stopped me from doing this for my own good. This shows how Hadrat Wālā gave due consideration to upholding limits. I also remember how a very poor man wearing dirty clothes stood next to me in the musjid for the congregational salāh. I thoroughly enjoyed myself while thinking to myself that poor people have a very high rank in Allāh's sight and that external wealth and honour are of no significance.

A Distinguishing Feature Of Hadrat Wālā's Associates

In short, I was thoroughly blessed after pledging bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā and, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā,* I developed a special attachment to Dīn and became very conscious about what is lawful and what is not in whatever I did. This blessing of Hadrat Wālā is so glaring that it can be observed in almost all his associates and disciples. In fact, they are recognized by this special quality of strict observance to piety and Allāh-consciousness.

The Story Of A Builder

When a completely illiterate builder of Fatahpūr pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā, he became concerned about the speed with which work was done under contract and the one which was done under an owner's supervision. A person who had not even pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā said to me during my stay in Fatahpūr – which was over 25 years ago – with regard to this builder: "We certainly witnessed the effects of Hadrat Maulānā. Anyone who became connected to him would attach full importance to practising on the Sharīʿah. He would worry about what was lawful and what was not in whatever he did."

A Statement Of Amīr Shāh Khān

I had the occasion of staying over in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband with Janāb Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the ex-deputy principal. Janāb Amīr Shāh Khān Sāhib was also staying over. He was a very old personality who had met many senior personalities and remained in their company. I asked

him whether the lantern which we were using belonged to the Madrasah or not. He asked me: "Are you a murīd of Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib?" I replied: "Yes." He said: "I observed this quality of concern about such matters mostly in the murīds of the Maulānā. This is why I gauged that you must be his murīd."

The Story Of A Student

There was a person whose name and other details Hadrat Wālā cannot remember but whom he considered to be reliable at the time because a senior and well-known scholar-teacher had also related a similar incident. The Maulānā saw a foreign student in the musjid of his madrasah studying under the musjid lamp. When it was the time to put off the musjid lamps, he put off the lamp immediately, lit his own lamp and continued studying. Where do we find people who are so particular about such matters? And that too, students who consider the musjid oil to be their personal property! When the Maulānā saw this, he said to those who were around him: "This student seems to be an associate of Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī." After making inquiries, he learnt that the student was in fact a disciple of Hadrat Wālā.

The Real Miracle Of A Shaykh

I [the author] say: Creating a consciousness of Dīn in students and a concern for what is lawful and what is not is the real miracle of a shaykh, a clear indication of his blessedness and holiness, and his fundamental duty. There are thousands of examples wherein anyone who reverted to Hadrat Wālā for rectification, gradually imbibed his colour – which can be referred to as *sibghatullāh* (the colour of Allāh) – and the person's entire life changed. I personally saw such people who were absolutely "dry" in the beginning but within a few visits, their hearts developed such pain and heat that sobbing at every breath became their mark and their entire colour changed. Since Hadrat Wālā is himself a bearer of pain, heat and the Chishtī affiliation, genuine seekers are immediately affected by him and the following couplet applies without any exaggeration:

> I take an oath by Allāh that anyone who became a murīd of Sayyid Gaysū Darāz *rahimahullāh* became caught up in intense love [for Allāh *taʿālā*].

A Special Quality Of Associating With Hadrat Wālā

Hadrat Wālā himself says: "The Chishtīyyah spiritual family is an electric wire. As long as you do not touch it, it will not envelope you." I just remembered a statement of Hadrat Wālā with regard developing concern for Dīn and consciousness of what is lawful and what is not by virtue of associating with him. He made this statement after relating the condition of a certain shaykh who used to instruct his murīds to engage in vigorous dhikr for two hours at a time but never prohibited them from their un-Islamic dressing, appearance and other evil actions. Hadrat Wālā said: "What is so difficult about engaging in dhikr for two hours? A person works hard for a short while and is then free to do whatever he wants the entire day and night. Only that person must come to me who wants to place a saw over his self by night and day, and is concerned about what action is lawful and what is not at every step of his life."

Teaching The Reality

The purpose behind Hadrat Wālā's entire system of scolding, reprimanding and enquiring is to create this same concern and worry in his associates and disciples. This is the source of all good deeds and praiseworthy conditions. He refers to it as diligence, perseverance and attention; and considers it most essential in the path. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* this quality is a salient feature in most of his associates. Moreover, no one can gain admission in Hadrat Wālā's spiritual chain without first acquiring sound judgement and an understanding of the reality of the path. After observing these collective conditions, I had this belief that almost every associate of Hadrat Wālā has the qualification to be a leader himself, and people hold on to his actions. Just recently I heard a verification of this from Hadrat Wālā himself and was overjoyed by it.

A learned shaykh labelled the imaginary thoughts of a student which had certainly stemmed from a corrupt imagination as genuine and true inspirations. Instead of removing the poor ignorant student from this ignorance, he gave him more confidence and caused him to fall into compounded ignorance. I said to Hadrat Wālā: "By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's lowest associate can understand such matters and will never make a mistake as made by this shaykh." Hadrat Wālā

replied: "It is certainly Allāh's favour that no one over here is ignorant about the reality of the path. This is because of my strictness and honesty or else confusion would have reigned over here as well. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am satisfied with all who are here and I consider almost each one to be eligible to be given permission [to induct murīds or to be appointed as a khalīfah]. I would have given permission to all of them but religious propriety demands that the person given permission must have some external respectability, whether it is religious or worldly. For example, he must be a learned person or belong to a respectable family so that no one has any reservations about reverting to him and the path is not brought into disrepute."

Glory to Allāh! Look at how every matter was fully weighed and ascertained by Hadrat Wālā, how each point was based on absolutely correct principles, and perfected from every angle! This ought to be the mark of a Mujaddid and a Hakīm al-Ummah.

Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion: "All praise is due to Allāh I have such associates who have fully understood the principles of rectification and can carry out spiritual tutoring better than many famous spiritual masters. However, the problem nowadays is that people align themselves to a person because of the latter's popularity. No one looks at his expertise. There is a lot of ignorance about the path." Hadrat Wālā heard about the strict adherence to piety of one of his khulafā', Janāb Hājī Shamshād Sāhib. He spontaneously quoted the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* in a very pleased tone:

> The beloved brought up in our home is not inferior to anyone.

It is most appropriate and seemed as if it was composed for this very occasion.

My Love For Hadrat Wālā

In short, through the blessings of pledging bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā, I developed a lot of concern about what is lawful and what is not. Some incidents in this regard were quoted above. My love for him had reached such a level that if a person who is ignorant about love were to hear of it, he will refer to it as madness. And a person who has no affinity with it will make jokes of it. The following couplet applies:

> Although we may be maligned by the intelligent ones, we do not desire popularity and fame.
>
> The conversations of lovers in matters related to Allāh *taʿālā* are due to a fervour of love and not out of disrespect.

An Astonishing Expression Of Love

In my fervour of love, I said to Hadrat Wālā in a very hesitating, ashamed and subdued tone: "Hadrat! A very obscene thought comes repeatedly into my heart. I am also very ashamed to express it and cannot find the courage." Hadrat Wālā was getting up and proceeding to the musjid at the time. He said to me: "Let it out, let it out." I lowered myself out of shame and said: "This thought comes repeatedly into my heart that I should have been a woman who was married to you." Hadrat Wālā was most pleased by this expression of love, laughed unwittingly and said as he was entering the musjid: "This is certainly your love for which you will be rewarded. Allāh willing, you will be rewarded for it."

Hadrat Wālā has not forgotten this incident to this day. He takes delight in relating it in his assembly and says jokingly: "At least he did not hope for the opposite."

Speaking About Hadrat Wālā All The Time

I was so enamoured by Hadrat Wālā during those days that my heart desired that I should have his books in my hand, and go around like a mad man speaking about him to everyone – those who were eligible and those who were not. In fact, even to the doors, walls, trees, rocks, unbelievers, animals; and to read his books to them. I remember very clearly how on one occasion of ʿĪd al-Ad-hā my sacrificial goat was tied in an empty section of my house. When I went there, I was overtaken by a desire to sit down and speak about Hadrat Wālā to it.

Addressing Monkeys

I was engaged in the dhikr of Allāh *taʿālā* on one occasion when I suddenly experienced a forceful pull towards Hadrat Wālā. It seemed like the force of lightning. I pictured him with great intensity and love for him embedded itself forcefully in the depths of my heart. The room in which I was engaged in dhikr was in the upper storey and the windows were closed. There

was a roof on the opposite side. I heard a sound on the roof so I opened a window and saw monkeys jumping around. They fled the moment I opened the window. Since I was in an overwhelmed state of fervent love for Hadrat Wālā at the time, I unwittingly addressed the monkeys and said: "Hey, where are you fleeing to? At least listen to the dhikr of Hadrat, and then you can go."

Faith In Hadrat Wālā's Relatives

I used to be very respectful towards Hadrat Wālā's worldly-minded relatives as well. I kissed the hands of his younger brother, Munshī Akbar ʿAlī Sāhib, although his dressing and appearance at the time were unbecoming. He was quite ashamed by my action. As far as I remember, I sought permission from Hadrat Wālā to give vent to my natural feeling in this manner. Hadrat Wālā was very particular about taking into consideration the feelings of others, so he said to me: "He will be embarrassed. It will be better for you to seek his permission first." I did as I was advised. Since he was of an informal disposition, he permitted me to kiss his hand after seeing my eagerness. He said: "It will cause me no harm."

His young son, Muhammad ʿAlī, was sitting and eating grapes with me. Because this young boy was Hadrat Wālā's nephew, I began sucking on his left over grape peels. The child stopped me from doing this in his own infant language.

Correspondence With Hadrat Wālā

The letters which I wrote to Hadrat Wālā during that period were filled with love and adoration. Hadrat Wālā's replies too were very flowery and loving. I remember not addressing him with the normal titles of respect and etiquette in one of those letters. Instead, I addressed him with the following couplet:

> O my life! O my beloved! O my king! O you who alone
> are my Islam and my īmān!

This couplet is from the *Mathnawī Zer-wa-Bum* which was written by Hadrat Wālā during his student days.

My letters of those days used to be very lengthy. I apologized to Hadrat Wālā for this in one of my letters. Glory to Allāh! Look at the loving and affectionate manner in which he replied: "Have you ever seen any disapproval over the long hair-locks of

the beloved!" Some of my letters contained nothing but poems of the spiritual masters and true lovers of Allāh *taʿālā*. Despite this, Hadrat Wālā used to ascertain my condition from the poems themselves. When replying to such letters, he would reply with poems which were appropriate to my condition. This consoled me totally.

A Reply To An Ode

One of my letters was filled with amatory poems which I had composed while in a state of intense enthusiasm and eagerness. Although I was very particular about adhering to the spiritual practices which Hadrat Wālā had prescribed for me, writing these poems interfered severely with my programme. I complained about this in my letter. His reply is quoted here from *Ahsan al-ʿAzīz*, volume 1, no. 338.

> I was overtaken by ecstasy when I received your ode which, based on your natural capabilities, is an eternal ode. May Allāh *taʿālā* fulfil all your objectives. As for the issue of wasting time, that is solved by obedience to divine decree to which man has to succumb. Your intention was to control your time but time got wasted. Allāh willing, the fact that this issue was realized by yourself, it will be a springboard for progress. Māshā Allāh, the prayer mat of ʿAlī Sajjād Sāhib is also taking on a colour. Distressed with love and passing on the agony of love. Ashraf ʿAlī

Allāh-Bestowed Insight

Some time after I pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā in Allāhābād, I learnt that he is to deliver a lecture in Itāwah. I went there enthusiastically. My nephew who was a very intelligent and well-known person was a deputy collector there. Hadrat Wālā was introduced to him very briefly but he immediately perceived my nephew's intelligence and said to me: "He seems to be very intelligent." I was astonished at how Hadrat Wālā identified this quality of his after such a short and informal meeting when it was only ascertained by others after a very long time of interaction. This quality of perception in Hadrat Wālā is from among his many natural qualities and capabilities and must have manifested itself thousands of times in the course of training and tutoring the seekers. This Allāh-

bestowed insight is proof of Hadrat Wālā's perfect intelligence which he inherited from his forefather, Hadrat ʿUmar Fārūq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He is the external cause for Hadrat Wālā being a specialist physician of the Muslim community, a lighthouse of instruction and an imām of Sufism of the highest level. The real and essential cause is obviously Allāh *taʿālā*.

> Capability is not a prerequisite for His bestowal. Rather, His bestowal is a prerequisite for capability.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ، وَمَنْ يُّؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ اُوْتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا، وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ اِلَّا اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ

He confers wisdom to whomever He wills. Whoever is given wisdom has been given immense good. It is only the intelligent who take admonition.[1]

Hadrat Wālā's Appealing Personality

It has been observed on countless occasions by numerous people that anyone who looks at Hadrat Wālā without any preconceived notions immediately develops faith and confidence in him from within his heart. He is automatically drawn towards him. This is an indication that he is beloved in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā*. Hadrat Wālā himself said on one occasion: "When I turn to a person and speak to him, he becomes completely subdued to me as if his heart has come into my hand."

My nephew whom I just mentioned above was very impressed by Hadrat Wālā merely by meeting him, speaking with him and observing the humble manner in which he performed salāh. He explained to me the reason for his impression: "I knew he was a powerful scholar from beforehand, this is why I was impressed in this way."

How To Become Regular With Salāh

I had another relative in Itāwah who was a free thinker and looked like an Englishman from head to toe. He too was so impressed by Hadrat Wālā that he asked me to obtain an amulet for him so that he becomes regular with salāh. When I made this request to Hadrat Wālā, he said: "I do not know of any such amulet whereby I could place a policeman together with his stick inside the amulet, who would then come out of it

[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 269.

at the time of salāh and ensures he performs his salāh. Yes, I can teach him a method through which he can become a regular performer of salāh within a few days. But this procedure is not to be merely asked about; it has to be practised. The procedure is this: If he misses one salāh, he must skip one meal. If he misses two salāhs, he must skip two meals. If he misses three salāhs, he must skip three meals. Once he experiences this hunger a few times, his self will be rectified and he will perform his salāh regularly and punctually. As I said, this procedure has to be practised. If a person takes the courage to practise it and remains firm in his resolution, it is impossible for him not to become a true performer of salāh."

The effects of my first meeting with Hadrat Wālā in Allāhābād were refreshed by this second meeting in Itāwah and my desire to imbibe from him increased in intensity. Hadrat Wālā's affection too increased to such an extent that when he was about to return to his hometown, he – despite his natural and well-known independence – asked me if I would like to come to Thānah Bhawan. He asked me this after seeing my enthusiasm. However, I had only made preparations for the journey to Itāwah so I could not accompany him to Thānah Bhawan.

Adoration

Soon thereafter, Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband held its graduation ceremony which was attended by Hadrat Wālā. I was also present. There were thousands of people, and the largest number of people gathered around Hadrat Wālā. This quality of being adored by people is one of the most distinguished qualities of Hadrat Wālā and needs no elucidation. Although Hadrat Wālā was very strict in reprimanding people over their uncivil actions, the adoration which Allāh *ta'ālā* had placed in him removed all these external causes of dislike and alienation. On one occasion he became fed up with people crowding to shake hands with him on a busy street and said to them: "If you are not going to listen, I will have to start beating you." But the people did not bother, fell upon him from all sides, and a throng of them followed him wherever he went.

Hadrat Wālā had just recently recovered from a severe illness. He was still weak and could therefore not bear the disorderly crowds of people. Because of his illness, he was not even

expected to attend the graduation ceremony. However, he saw a dream in which he was addressing the gathering and explaining this H̲adīth to the people: "Love for this world is the root of all evil." On seeing this dream, he had hopes of recovery and the ability to attend. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he recovered unexpectedly at the exact time of the ceremony and delivered a lecture despite his weakness. He spoke on the above-quoted H̲adīth. Details in this regard were provided under the chapter, Sound Admonition.

Eminence

I witnessed H̲ad̲rat Wālā's eminence and majesty for the first time during this ceremony. Prior to this, I had only witnessed his quality of beauty. In ordinary situations, I always found him to be an embodiment of kindness, mercy and dignity; and I still find him to be a personification of beauty. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for this. However, if the person whom Allāh *taʿālā* sent into this world as a reformer does not have the necessary quality of majesty as well, he will not be able to carry out his responsibility as he ought to. H̲ad̲rat Shaykh Akbar Muh̲īyy ad-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī *rah̲imahullāh* writes in *al-Amr al-Muh̲kam al-Marbūt̲ fī mā Yalzamu Ahl T̲arīqillāh min ash-Shurūt̲*:

فلا بد أن يكون عند الشيخ دين الأنبياء، وتدبير الأطباء، وسياسة الملوك. وحينئذ يقال له الأستاذ.

A shaykh must possess the religiosity of the Prophets, the deliberation of physicians and the administrative acumen of kings. Only then can he be referred to as a true master.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, He conferred these three qualities to the full to H̲ad̲rat Wālā. All praise is due solely to Allāh *taʿālā*. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills. In short, a reformer has to have the quality of majesty. However, this quality only displays itself when there is a need for it. And the need only arises when a condition of a seeker has to be corrected and rectified. Since it is necessary for the rectification of seekers, it is no less than the quality of beauty. In fact, it is more important in certain situations when bearing in mind the results which it brings about.

There are countless examples of H̲ad̲rat Wālā's majestic influence and the excellent results which it brought. He

removed the pride of thousands of arrogant fellows and set right their attitudes. In so doing, he honoured them with self-obliteration and submission – qualities which are the essentials of Sufism. A single scolding uprooted chronic spiritual ailments for the rest of a person's life. Many heedless souls were awakened through constant reprimanding which made them vigilant with regard to the tricks and deceptions of the self for the rest of their lives. Genuine concern for Dīn was instilled in the hearts of many indifferent souls. There are thousands of examples of this nature which are witnessed by night and day. I cannot relate them all. Just a few are mentioned here.

A Treatment For Blasphemous Whisperings

A person was troubled by blasphemous thoughts and whisperings for quite some time and complained to Hadrat Wālā several times. On one occasion he met Hadrat Wālā in privacy and said: "My heart now feels that I must become a Christian." On hearing this, Hadrat Wālā slapped him immediately, pushed him aside and said: "Get out you wretched fellow. You want to become a Christian? Who is stopping you? Go and become a Christian right now. Go and disgrace yourself. Islam certainly does not need an ungrateful and wretched fellow like you. In fact it will be better if you go, Islam will be purified of unworthy people as yourself. How will it harm anyone if you become a Christian? You will go to Hell."

No sooner Hadrat Wālā slapped him, all his whisperings disappeared. They were repulsed in such a manner that at least fifteen years have passed since the incident and the man did not even dream of such whisperings. That one slap was like a laxative which removed all the filth from inside.

A Man Is Treated For Love

A man who was regular with salāh and fasting lived in a town near Thānah Bhawan. He fell in love with a Brahman widow. He used to go intentionally to her under the pretext of purchasing milk from her. In the process, he would cast lustful glances at her. He related his secret to a friend and said: "I am entrapped in this calamity. How can I escape it?" His friend advised him to go to Thānah Bhawan and to relate his condition to Hadrat Wālā. He presented himself, described his condition on a piece of paper and handed it personally to Hadrat Wālā. He added in his note: "I have fallen so much in

love with her that if she were to give me her urine to drink, I will drink it without any hesitation."

As was his habit, Hadrat Wālā first adopted a soft approach by advising him to keep away from her and to completely give up going to her. The man said: "But I go intentionally and wittingly to her." Hadrat Wālā became angry, slapped him and scolded him thus: "You wretched fellow, when you are not abstaining intentionally, why are you coming to me for a treatment? Go into the fire. What treatment can I give you when you are striking your own self?"

The slap proved to be an elixir for the man. He became extremely remorseful, it hurt his self severely, all his mischief disappeared and he became straight once again. He developed a dislike for the woman and stopped frequenting her. He came to his senses with the single slap and the devil left his mind. Hadrat Wālā relates: "Later on I regretted my action for having slapped a stranger. But what could I do, my religious fervour compelled me to raise my hand. But it proved beneficial to him."

A Youngster Is Treated Over His Love For A Prostitute

Hadrat Wālā relates another similar incident together with the above incident. Instead of being strict, he was most soft to the person, and the softness proved to be beneficial. He says: A youngster was brought to me by his father, uncle and a few other family members. They complained thus: "He is having a relationship with a prostitute and is wasting away all our wealth for it. Please explain to him." Instead of advising him in the presence of his family, I held him by his hand and took him into the musjid. I seated him in privacy and spoke to him as though I was his well-wisher and confidant. I said to him: "What do these people know about your heart is feeling! But you must clearly tell me what has compelled you into doing something which is causing you not to be bothered about your honour and the destruction of your wealth?"

I was still talking to him in this vein when his father, uncle and others entered the musjid to listen to what I was saying to him. I scolded them saying: "What is this rudeness for? Go and do whatever you have to. This matter is between him and myself. Why do you have to interfere in our matter?" They got up and left. This increased the youngster's confidence in me and he

became fully at ease with me. He considered me to be his genuine well-wisher. When his family members left after I scolded them, I posed the same question to him again: "Why are you so much in love with her? Tell me clearly."

He replied: "The fact is that initially I really loved her. But now my relationship with her is superficial because on one occasion she had made me make a promise to her at the grave of Hadrat Makhdūm Sāhib *rahimahullāh* in Pīrān Kalyar Sharīf that I will always maintain a relationship with her and never leave her. One of the attendants at the grave saw us and approached us. He took a special and solemn oath from both of us that we will never turn away from each other. I now fear that if I were to cut off my relationship with her, a calamity from above will strike me. After all, I had taken an oath at the grave of a pious man that I will maintain my relationship with her."

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said to those who were present: "People are very strange. They have no shame in committing such shameless acts at the graves of pious personalities and making them witnesses to such unlawful promises. The attendants at the graves are more worse for encouraging such sins at the graves. I seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā*. There is no power and might except with Allāh *taʿālā*. I will not be surprised if he [the attendant at the grave] received some monetary return in exchange for their advice. In fact, he must have certainly received something because that is his occupation."

Hadrat Wālā continues: "After listening to the youngster, I said to him: 'Very well, tell me, do you consider me to be your confidant and well-wisher?' He replied: 'Certainly.' I asked: 'Do you consider me to be an honest person?' He replied in the affirmative and said: 'If you are not an honest person who else can there be who can be considered to be honest!?' I said: 'I take an oath that if you do not break this promise, a calamity will certainly afflict you. If you break it, you will never experience a calamity because of breaking it. It is obligatory to break a promise of this nature. However, since your promise entails an oath, you will have to pay an atonement for breaking it. But this is nothing serious, it can be easily paid.'"

"The youngster said: 'My only fear was that some calamity will befall me, and I maintained this relationship solely because of this fear. I no longer have any love for her. Now that you are

assuring me that no calamity will afflict me if I were to give her up, I will certainly give her up. However, permit me to go to her just once so that I can inform her that I no longer have anything to do with her. The reason why I am asking you to permit me is so that she does not have to wait expectantly for me. After all, it is undignified to keep someone waiting. I do not know for how long the poor woman will continue waiting for me.'"

Anyway, Hadrat Wālā permitted him but said: "Look, you must only inform her. Beware of doing anything else." The youngster promised and assured Hadrat Wālā. When the two spoke to the father, uncle and other relatives and they learnt that Hadrat Wālā gave him permission to go to her just once, they said: "This is nothing but his mischief. He will not give up frequenting her." Hadrat Wālā scolded them saying: "Keep quiet! What do you know. I have full confidence in him." Hadrat Wālā then turned to the boy and said: "Son, you must take whatever jewellery and other items which you gave to her." The youngster said: "Whatever I have given to her is gone. What is the need to take back what I gave? It seems very undignified to do that."

Hadrat Wālā did not insist on this. They all left. The boy's father came to Hadrat Wālā a few days later, gave him five rupees, and said: "Buy sweetmeats with this money and distribute it among those who are in the Madrasah. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, through your blessings, my son has cut off all ties with that woman. As he had promised to you, he went to her solely to inform her of the breaking up of their relationship. He hasn't gone back to her." After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "At the time, it came to my mind that a soft approach will be most appropriate for him. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, softness proved to be beneficial."

A Man Is Treated For Pride

Hadrat Wālā stopped over in Kīrānah in the course of one of his journeys. A man came to pledge bayʿah and also brought some sweetmeats which he hoped to distribute. However, instead of bringing the sweetmeats himself, he got another man to carry it for him. From this action of his and from his entire demeanour, Hadrat Wālā ascertained that he has pride and that he thinks highly of himself. Hadrat Wālā wanted to treat the pride and arrogance of the man. Instead of accepting his bayʿah at that

very place, Hadrat Wālā said to him: "I do not have the time here. I have to go to a certain person's place. Maybe I will get a chance to accept your bayʿah there. You may come there." The poor fellow had to accompany Hadrat Wālā together with the man who was carrying the tray of sweetmeats. Since he had brought the sweetmeats for the sake of distributing them after the bayʿah, he could not leave them behind. On reaching that place, Hadrat Wālā said: "What can I say? I do not even have the time here." They proceeded to a third place and Hadrat Wālā said the same thing again. In short, Hadrat Wālā caused him to go around with him for about two hours together with the tray of sweetmeats. And he made it a point of going through the market places so that the man's ego may be thoroughly trampled and his arrogance may leave his heart. When Hadrat Wālā troubled him properly and gauged that he has realized his illness, he accepted his bayʿah.

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā commented thus: "A serious ailment like pride which does not leave a person even after many years of spiritual striving left this man within two hours by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*." He added: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* my treatment here is done through such ploys. Allāh *taʿālā* enables me to think them up at the appropriate times. The elders of the past also resorted to such ploys."

Hadrat Wālā Rectifies His Nephew

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to Maulānā Saʿīd Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was the elder brother of Hadrat Wālā's blood nephew, Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib ʿUthmānī: "I loved him the most but I was the strictest towards him." The result of this treatment was that previously he wore very elegant clothes and was so proud that he used to say: 'If there is any job, I must receive a minimum monthly salary of 1 000 rupees.' But then he obliterated himself totally and completely, and began considering himself to be lower than tanners and toilet-cleaners. He also began wearing very simple clothes. When he passed away and his clothes were taken out for distribution, everyone was astonished and surprised at their simplicity. Hadrat Wālā himself said: "When I saw the condition of those clothes, I cried from within myself."

I [the author] personally saw the harsh and strict manner in which Hadrat Wālā treated him while at home and on journeys. I saw him scolding and reprimanding him severely in the

presence of many people. We were in Allāhābād, travelling by horse-cart. There was no place in the cart so I went to sit with the herd-driver. Hadrat Wālā sent the Maulānā [his nephew] from inside the cart, seated him with the herd-driver, and called me to sit next to him. He then said to me: "This seating arrangement is advantageous to both of you. The advantage to him is that it will develop humility in him. The advantage to you is that you do not become overly humble and do not become conceited into thinking that you are very humble."

I heard that the Maulānā had delivered an excellent lecture in a gathering in Sahāranpūr. The audience was very impressed and all who were present began beholding the Maulānā with respect and awe. After the lecture, Hadrat Wālā reprimanded and scolded him severely over some unimportant matter before all who were present. He did this so that he does not develop any self-conceit and arrogance. Later on, Hadrat Wālā explained this as the reason for his treatment. If Hadrat Wālā does not give any concessions to his own beloved family members in matters concerning rectification and reformation, how could others ever have the audacity to make such demands?! This is especially so when we bear in mind Hadrat Wālā's own statement on this subject: "Concession in this regard is a betrayal of trust."

Hadrat Wālā Refuses To Accept The Bay'ah Of Some Nawābs And Relatives

Hadrat Wālā says quite often: "If a person's heart has not opened up sufficiently, he should at least not pressurize me so much that I cannot say to him that he is useless. I should at least be able to say to him that his action is useless and inappropriate. If I cannot say even that, then it is not permissible to accept such a person as a murīd in the first place." This is why he excused himself from accepting the bay'ah of some Nawābs and influential people despite their persistence. Moreover, he generally abstained from accepting his relatives as murīds, except in special circumstances when their heart had opened up completely. Hadrat Wālā was a bit lenient in this regard in the beginning but when he experienced certain constrictions and inconveniences, he almost entirely gave up accepting his relatives as murīds. He says: "In most cases, it is pointless to accept relatives as murīds because they

have some pride in them [over their relationship], whereas this relationship is one of submission."

He continues: "When it comes to non-relatives, I reprimand and scold them without any reservations. In fact, if I find it necessary to expel them from here, I will do it. But if such a need arises with relatives, it becomes difficult to pluck the courage to do such a thing because of our relationship and because they themselves expect special treatment. I myself have a natural urge to accord them special treatment. If religious benefit is given preference over natural urges and a strict approach is adopted, the effects of ill-feeling will spread from one family member to the other. Thus, after experiencing such situations, I concluded that the safest thing to do is to excuse myself from the spiritual training of relatives. This is what I do in most cases."

The Need For Diplomacy In Rectification

As stated in the quotation from H̲ad̲rat Shaykh Akbar *rah̲imahullāh*, a shaykh must possess the diplomacy of kings. The nature of people in general is such that rectification cannot be realized without some strictness. The need for it is accepted by all of those who possess intelligence. Every civilized nation has laid down certain principles of diplomacy as per its individual needs. In fact, the system of the world is based on the principles of diplomacy. When diplomacy is essential for external peace, it ought to be more necessary for internal spiritual peace because rectification of external evil is not as difficult as rectification of internal evil. It is therefore most astonishing when diplomacy is not considered necessary for the removal of the evils of the self. If a reformer revives the method of rectification of the elders of the past and rectifies the seekers on natural principles, then every Tom, Dick and Harry is ready to raise objections. Whereas the objectors themselves resort to diplomacy when dealing with those who are under them, and there too they search for what is most prudent.

There is a well known idiom in Arabic which says that every person is forbearing only at the time of the anger of others. We will only accept the objections when the objector is never displeased by any error of his workers, he never reprimands his children for doing something unacceptable and no matter how much someone annoys him, he does not stop him, scold him or expresses any complaint. He just remains silent and

forbearing. If he himself does this, we can say he has some basis for objecting. If not, he ought to be ashamed of himself. If a person is so insensitive that he does not become angry when the situation demands him to become angry, then he must listen to the following fatwā of Hadrat Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* as quoted in *Tabaqāt Kubrā* of Hadrat Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh*:

من استغضب فلم يغضب فهو حمار، ومن استرضى فلم يرض فهو شيطان.

If a person is angered (i.e. treated in a manner in which sound temperament demands on him to become angry) but does not become angry, then he is an ass. If a person's pleasure is sought (i.e. a person apologizes to him for his mistake and seeks his pleasure) and he does not become pleased, then he is a Satan (because it is a sign of severe pride. This is why he is a Satan).

Natural Leniency And Harshness

We just spoke about the general need for and wisdom behind diplomacy. As per Hadrat Wālā's statement, the temperaments of some specific spiritual masters are so overwhelmingly forbearing that they overpower prudence. When they are faced with something which ought to cause anger, they are not prompted to become angry even though they may be displeased. These natural differences in temperaments have been a continuous norm of Allāh *taʿālā* which encompasses thousands of conceptual and legal wisdoms which concern not only normal temperaments but also temperaments of the elite and the spiritual masters. The following Hadīth is a clear indication of this. It is quoted verbatim from volume four of Hadrat Wālā's *at-Tasharruf* together with his explanation and commentary.

في السماء ملكان، أحدهما يأمر بالشدة والآخر باللين، وكلاهما مصيب. أحدهما جبرئيل والآخر ميكائيل. ونبيان أحدهما يأمر باللين والآخر بالشدة، وكل مصيب، إبراهيم ونوح. ولي صاحبان أحدهما يأمر باللين والآخر بالشدة، أبو بكر وعمر (طب) وابن عساكر عن أم سلمة (ض) لكن قال العزيزي بإسناد صحيح. والله أعلم.

There are two angels in the heavens; one commands severity and the other leniency. (This command is really from Allāh taʿālā because they only carry out what they are ordered to do. They instruct their helpers to act severely or leniently because they

themselves are ordered – through revelation – to render services which entail severity or leniency depending on what wisdom demands. Alternatively, this could be an allusion to their natural severity and leniency which they pass on due to these qualities being found intrinsically in them, although they may not literally command it). Both of them are correct (because they are appropriate to the situations). One of them is Jibra'īl 'alayhis salām (who is by and large in charge of arranging the descent of punishment, etc.) and the other is Mīkā'īl 'alayhis salām (who, in most cases, is in charge of arranging the descent of rains, etc.).

(Just as there are two angels for these two qualities) there are two Prophets (for these two qualities). One commands leniency and the other severity. (The above two possibilities exist here as well). Both are correct (because if they are doing it via divine revelation, then we know that it is obviously and undoubtedly correct. If they are doing it through their independent judgement, then as long as divine revelation does not stop them from it, it is incumbent to practise on independent judgement). The two Prophets are Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām and Nūh 'alayhis salām (the first commands leniency and the second, severity). I have two Companions (possessing the same qualities), one commands leniency and the other, severity. They are Abū Bakr radiyallāhu 'anhu and 'Umar radiyallāhu 'anhu (whose leniency and severity are well-known).

Note: Hanafī said that the purpose of this Hadīth is to demonstrate that Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* – each one possesses a quality of each of the above mentioned Prophets and angels, and that both of them are correct because severity is needed where leniency is not suitable, and leniency is needed where severity is not appropriate.

I say that the meaning of the Hadīth is still not clear because the reason which is given for their correctness raises the question of why is there a difference in their qualities? After all, if a situation demands severity, every one ought to respond with severity. And if a situation demands leniency, every person ought to respond with leniency. I therefore feel that the explanation is that everyone agrees that leniency must be adopted if the situation demands it, and severity must be adopted if the situation demands it. But the difference comes in when in one and the same situation there is difference of

opinion due to differences in temperaments. Should leniency or severity be adopted in that one situation? For example, as it had happened with regard to the captives after the Battle of Badr. Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* differed with regard to them. The first was of the opinion that they must pay a ransom, while the second felt that they must be killed. Such differences are possible in situations which require independent judgements. The difference between Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* can certainly be of this nature.

As for the differences between the two Prophets or the two angels, if they also resort to independent judgements, then the above explanation can apply to them as well. But if it is not based on independent judgement, instead, every difference is caused by divine revelation, then the purpose of the simile will be differences in general and not specific differences. We will then explain it as follows: No objections should be made against these qualities which are found in Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* because it has been a continuous norm of Allāh *taʿālā* to created differing qualities in His close servants. The differences in temperaments between those who receive divine revelation [Prophets] is displayed through differences in divine revelation. Those who are non-Prophets, their differences are displayed through independent judgement. The question that was raised above is now answered. By establishing the differences in the temperaments of the Prophets, another issue becomes very clear, viz. the differences in the temperaments of the spiritual masters. Some immature people make objections to this. For example, they say: "What kind of Sufi is this? He did not act severely against this serious matter!" Or, "What kind of Sufi is this? He is acting so severely in regard to this light matter!"

The above Hadīth clearly exposes the error of these objectors. The essence is that each one's intention is rectification. Differences in temperaments result in differences in opinions. One considers leniency to be the way of rectification, the other considers severity to be the way.

At this point, I recall a statement of Maulānā Muhammad ʿAlī Maungerī *rahimahullāh*, a khalīfah of Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī *rahimahullāh*. He used to say: "Some people make objections against the Maulānā's harsh

temperament. They do not realize that Allāh *taʿālā* created His servants with different temperaments from the very beginning. Thereafter, He made some of these servants into His close and accepted servants. After they become His accepted servants, the natural temperament does not change. This is why some of these accepted servants are lenient while others are strict." The quotation from *at-Tasharruf* ends here.

We learn from the above Hadīth that severity is not disliked totally. Rather, unnecessary and unwise severity is disliked. In the latter case, it [severity] as per a statement of Hadrat Wālā, "is not severity but hard-heartedness." As for the severity which is for the sake of organization and rectification – as mentioned in this Hadīth – it is absolutely praiseworthy because, as per the statement of Hadrat Wālā, "it is not severity but sharpness; it is not force but direction; it is not harshness but soundness."

A Legacy Of The Fārūqī Lineage

Glory to Allāh! Look at the fine poetic manner in which Hadrat Wālā expresses the facts. It clearly displays his investigative acumen and literary skills. Since he is – by the order of Allāh *taʿālā* – of Fārūqī lineage, he is a true exponent of Hadrat 'Umar Fārūq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* as regards praiseworthy severity. It is not confined to this single quality, rather, by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, he possesses many Fārūqī qualities which are clearly visible in him. For example, far-sightedness, vigilance, attentiveness to consequences, sharp-sightedness, correctness of opinion, independence, justice, proclaiming the truth, desire for the truth, supervision of the self, fear of Allāh, servitude, steadfastness, diligence, consideration, kindness, decorum, love, generosity, bravery, mercy and so on. Allāh willing, some of these qualities will be detailed in a forthcoming chapter.

Praiseworthy Severity

The severity which is found in Hadrat Wālā is praiseworthy, it is certainly not blameworthy as considered by some immature people. It will only be blameworthy if – Allāh forbid – Hadrat Wālā places such burdens on the seekers in the course of rectifying them in which there is no advantage and benefit. Or he has laid down such principles which are harsh in themselves. The principles laid down by him are all extremely

reasonable, totally in line with the demands of sound disposition, and extremely easy to practise on. Yes, he adheres very strictly to those principles and makes others to adhere to them strictly. This is because they are all correct principles which have been established after lengthy periods of experiences. They contain countless religious and worldly benefits for both parties. In short, it is certainly excessive to label strict adherence to principles as severity because, as per a statement of Hadrat Wālā himself, "A law which is easy in itself but adherence to it is strictly enacted cannot be labelled severe."

He explains this with an example: "Look, all the essential postures of salāh are extremely easy to carry out, and in the case of valid excuses, even more ease and concessions are given. However, adherence to them is strictly imposed. In such a case, the injunction of the Sharī'ah will not be labelled severe. Rather, those who break or transgress the injunction will be castigated. We will say to such a person: 'O you worthless fellow! There is so much of ease and concession in salāh but you are still failing in it.' This is why there are harsh punishments in the Hereafter for the one who abandons salāh, and harsh punishments in this world as well. Some imāms have gone to the extent of saying that it is incumbent to kill a person who abandons salāh."

Difference Between Severity And Adherence

Hadrat Wālā adds: "If the principles are soft but adherence to them is done with severity, then it is not severity but firmness. Take the example of a rope made of silk. It is so soft that you can knot it. At the same time, it is so strong that if you were to tie an elephant with it, it will not be able to break the rope. The silk rope will not be labelled severe or hard, but strong. Yes, a steel chain will be said to be hard because steel is essentially hard. If the chain is tied to a person's legs, it will injure him. But this is not the case with a silk rope. Although it surpasses the chain in its ability to restrict a person, the legs are not injured by it; rather they experience much comfort from it. If a person confines himself to it without any struggle and does not waste his time in trying to come out of it, he will not experience any pain of struggle and resistance."

Adhering To Correct Principles

Hadrat Wālā continues: "If a person comes here and adheres to the correct principles, he will never experience any unpleasantness because of me. People cast themselves into calamity by breaking the correct principles and committing unprincipled actions. They themselves are responsible for the calamity – not I nor my principles. Anyone staying here and observing everything with an open mind will find the truth exposed to him. Most of those who make objections are those who hear stories, not those who have observed visually. When an incident is observed, its entire sequence is before the person. The truth is then clear to him. I do not confine myself to imposing on others to adhere to the correct principles, but impose it on myself as well. I do not do it out of compulsion or to make a show. Rather, all thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* adherence to correct principles has become a natural demand within me. Although there is some difficulty in it and it also concerns those who are under me and my followers, correct principles have to be observed and upheld. Although many of those with whom I have dealings and interactions are not aware of how I give consideration to the principles, my heart feels satisfied over the fact that I upheld the principles. It is certainly not my purpose to show off to anyone."

Interaction With Hakīm Muhammad Hāshim Sāhib

I had a strong bond with Hakīm Muhammad Hāshim Sāhib Marhūm to the extent that he eventually pledged bayʿah to me. But if I had to describe my physical condition to him, I would go personally to his house even if my physical weakness inconvenienced me. He used to feel embarrassed when I used to go to him, but I would say: "There is nothing to feel embarrassed about. The person in need has to go to the person who is going to fulfil his need, and not the opposite." However, if I had to tell him to check the pulse of anyone in my house [referring to the women], I would summon him without hesitation because this was a compelling situation and this is what correct principles demanded.

Interaction With Nephew

Is there anyone on whom I could impose my will more than on Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī. He is like my son, he is my nephew, he lived with me since childhood. Despite this relationship, I take

full consideration of him. If I have to say anything to him, I do not summon him to myself because he may be occupied in some essential task at the time. Instead, I would go personally to him. In fact, if he came to me for any work and I had something to say to him, I would not say it at that time. Once he returns to his place, I would get up and go personally to his place and tell him whatever was needed to be said. I do this so that he feels free to come to me whenever he needs. He must not feel that if he comes to me, I will give him some other work to do.

Interaction With House Members

After having eaten my meal, I do not remember ever asking my wife to pick the dishes. If I did say it, I must have said it unwittingly. Instead, I would say: "Have the dishes picked up." Although she is under me, I give due consideration to the authority which she has over those who are under her. After all, we have to accord due respect to those who are under us as well. After that, she can pick up the dishes herself or have them picked up. I do not even ask the domestic worker to carry out any task. Rather, I will say it to my wife and she will convey it to her. This is because the domestic worker is directly under my wife's authority, so I take due consideration of her authority in this regard. Moreover, to address a strange woman without any real need is also against modesty.

Interaction With Employees

I do not ask my employees to carry out two tasks at once. I will first ask them to carry out a particular task. Once they have completed it, I will ask them to carry out the next one. I do this so that they do not feel burdened all at once and are not burdened into remembering both tasks. I bear the burden of remembering myself. If any task is difficult, I join them in carrying it out so that they experience some ease. If any task is confusing from the very beginning, I remove the confusion myself by describing it in sequence and then hand it over to them so that it becomes easy to carry out. Similarly, if I give a task to anyone, e.g. to copy something down for me, I hand it over while it is very clear to read so that the copier does not experience any problem or confusion in reading it. I have prohibited the sending of gifts through parcel post. A major

reason for this is that the workers find it troublesome to carry parcels.

When I hand over the salary to my employees, I do it with respect by placing it in front of them. I do not throw it at them as is the mark of arrogant people. If my house folk are not at home and I have to leave the house with the worker, I occupy myself intentionally in some task so that the worker can complete his or her personal needs at ease without having to worry that I am waiting for him or her.

Interaction With Associates, Guests And Friends

I leave the better path for those who are walking with me. In the beginning, I would always walk on the side of the road so that others are not inconvenienced. But recently my leg got into a drain, so I walk in the middle as a precaution. If I write to any of my special associates for some work, I include a reply envelope. No matter how beloved a guest maybe to me and no matter how much my heart may want him to stay over, I never impose on him against his wishes. When he says that he wants to leave, I say to him with an open heart: “You may do as you like and whatever has comfort for you.”

Interaction With My Father-In-Law

Pīrjī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib, the father of my junior wife, treats me as if I am his shaykh. However, I have so much respect for him in my heart as one ought to have for one’s father-in-law. But he does not even know this and I am not concerned about having him to know about it. I have to just satisfy my self that I am fulfilling the respect which he deserves. I do not have to receive any favours from him.

Consideration For The Comfort Of My House Folk

When I use any item of the house, I ensure I replace it in the exact place from where I took it so that whoever kept it there does not have to search for it. My wife fills the water can at night before going to sleep. She does this as a precaution if she might need it in the course of the night. If I ever have a need to use the water, I use it and re-fill the water can and place it exactly where she had placed it so that if she needs it, she will find it filled for her to use.

A Ghayr Muqallid's Impressions

There are many fine points; how much can I say! A Ghayr Muqallid came here. When he left, he said to one of his friends: "We only claim to follow the Sunnah. I saw strict adherence to the Sunnah there [in Thānah Bhawan]. When he [Hadrat Wālā] needed a book, he got up himself and brought it from the library. He did not order anyone to bring it for him. He did his own work by himself without inconveniencing anyone. Glory to Allāh! Look at his emulation of the Sunnah and his humility. He got up himself without any hesitation and brought it himself." The man was astonished at even this small insignificant action. In short, I do not impose the correct principles to others alone but on myself as well. This is why I become extremely displeased by the disorderliness of people. I take them into full consideration but they show total disregard to me.

Relatives Must Abide By The Rules

I [the author] say: Incidentally, my eyes fell on statement number 144 of the book, *Ahsan al-ʿAzīz* volume one which contains the statements of none other than Hadrat Wālā. I consider it appropriate to quote it here. The esteemed reader will realize that Hadrat Wālā did not impose strict adherence to correct principles on outsiders only, but to his near and dears ones as well.

I was invited to Hadrat Wālā's place on one occasion. One of his relatives asked one of the workers to bring water. Hadrat Wālā reprimanded the relative immediately by saying: "The host must not address his workers in such an authoritative tone. He should rather adopt a mannerly approach by saying: 'Please bring some water.'"

A few guests came to have a meal at Hadrat Wālā's house. They were seated in the men's room. One of Hadrat Wālā's relatives was lying on a bed with his child. Hadrat Wālā looked at him with a frown and said: "What is this rude behaviour! A few people are sitting on the floor while you are lying on the bed!?" He then said: "I am very informal with my relatives because it is their right. But I cannot tolerate them acting rudely or unmannerly towards my guests."

Comfort In Following Correct Principles

I [the author] say: There are thousands of incidents which portray Hadrat Wālā's considerations but I am confining myself to these in order to avoid this section becoming too lengthy. It is a factual reality that if a person lives with Hadrat Wālā while adhering to his principles, he will see – as have many people in the past and as many are still seeing – that he will never experience such a peaceful and comfortable life anywhere else. The person will find Hadrat Wālā's Khānqāh to be an embodiment of the following couplets:

> That place is a paradise where there is no discomfort and no one has any ulterior motives with another.
>
> If the Garden of Eternity is on earth, it is this, it is this.

Expression Of Displeasure At Being Inconvenienced

Based on my long experience, I can say without hesitation that if a person with sound understanding were to observe conditions and situations deeply and justly, Allāh willing, he will not be able to present a single incident after even many years of observation wherein Hadrat Wālā initiated an unpleasant treatment of another. The harm was always initiated by the other party. The principle – the one who initiates is more wrong – applies here. Since Hadrat Wālā's blessed disposition is naturally very fine and principled, he is severely affected by disorderly matters. In fact, in most cases he experiences a fever and a headache. He therefore expresses his annoyance and, because he is naturally short-tempered, he expresses himself in a loud voice. A person who is wronged is permitted to respond in this way based on the Qur'ānic teaching:

لَا يُحِبُّ اللهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوْءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ اِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ

Allāh does not like the evil of anyone to be exposed except he who has been wronged.[1]

This is certainly not severity. Hadrat Wālā says: "When another person silently pierces another with a needle, no one sees it [and no one objects]. But when I express myself loudly,

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 148.

everyone hears it [and objects]. The oppressor is therefore considered to be the oppressed and vice versa. I become maligned while the person who vexed me sits exonerated."

Consideration To Others

Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "There is certainly sharpness in me, but no severity – all praise is due to Allāh. In fact, I take so much of consideration to the sentiments of others that they themselves may have never thought of those fine points. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, my mind goes to distant possibilities of injury and He also inspires me to abstain from them. This is what makes me even more angry – that I am showing so much of consideration to the person but he shows so much of disregard for me."

There Is No Severity In Hadrat Wālā

The reader can ponder and reflect with justness: Can a person who endeavours so hard to abstain from causing the slightest injury to others ever have the quality of severity in him? While Hadrat Wālā possesses the quality of majesty and awe in him, he also has an extreme level of mercy, kindness and soft-heartedness – qualities which are well-known and observed in him. Some incidents in this regard were related in the first volume. Allāh willing, a few more will be related in a later chapter. How can a heart which possesses so much of softness and leniency ever have severity and harshness in it? After all, this would entail the convergence of two opposites which is impossible.

Proof That He Has No Severity

I recall the statement of an intelligent person. When a resident of Delhi heard about Hadrat Wālā's system of rectification in the form of a complaint, he posed a very penetrating and intelligent question to the person. He asked: "How is the Maulānā's interaction with children?" The man replied: "He is very informal with them, extremely affectionate towards them, and they too have a lot of affinity with him." The person said: "If that is the case, he is certainly not harsh and severe because a harsh person will not even pay any attention to children."

I recall an incident concerning Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* which a person used to quote from *Ihyā' al-ʿUlūm*. Hadrat

ʿUmar *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu* appointed a certain person as a zakāt collector over a certain region and despatched him to that place. As was his norm, he accompanied the person for some distance and gave him a few guidelines along the way. On the way, many children ran towards <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat ʿUmar *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu* and embraced him. He too responded with extreme love and affection, and began kissing them. The zakāt collector expressed in astonishment: "I have never kissed my own children while you are even kissing the children of outsiders!?" On hearing this, <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat ʿUmar *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Come back with me, you are not eligible to be a zakāt collector. If you cannot be affectionate towards your own children, what affection will you show to the subjects?"

I say: The quality of affection towards children which is found in <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Wālā is also inherited from his forefather, <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat ʿUmar *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu*.

Natural Short-Temperedness

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Wālā does not possess even a hint of blameworthy severity. Yes, he certainly has natural short-temperedness whose virtue is established from the following <u>H</u>adīth which is quoted with its translation from *at-Tasharruf*:

الحديث: الحدة تعتري خيار أمتي، هو في مسند الحسن بن سفيان من جهة الليث عن رويد بن نافع، قلت لأبي منصور الفارسي: يا أبا منصور، لو لا حدة فيك، فقال: ما يسرني بحدتي كذا وكذا وقد قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن الحدة تعتري خيار أمتي (وسماه بعضهم يزيد بن أبي منصور وحكم عليه بالصحبة) وفي بعض الروايات بلفظ ليس أحد أولى بالحدة من صاحب القرآن لعز القرآن في جوفه (ف) ويوجد مثل هذه الحدة في أهل الله حقيقتها الغيرة على الحق وحقيقة إظهارها ترك التكلف.

Short-temperedness is experienced by the righteous people of my community. This Hadīth is related in the Musnad of Hasan ibn Sufyān from al-Layth who narrates from Ruwayd ibn Nāfiʿ who said: I said to Abū Mansūr al-Fārisī: "O Abū Mansūr! If only you were not short-tempered." He replied: "Even if I were to receive such and such [wealth] in exchange for my short-temperedness I would not exchange it. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: 'Short-temperedness is experienced by the righteous people of my community.'" (Some scholars say that his name is Yazīd

ibn Mansūr and that he is a Sahābī). Some narrations contain the following words: "No person is more eligible for short-temperedness than a person of the Qur'ān by virtue of the greatness of the Qur'ān which is in his heart." Note: Short-temperedness of this nature is found in some men of Allāh. The reality of it is their sense of honour for the truth, and the reality of their expression of it is their abandonment of formalities.

Consideration For The Benefit Of Seekers

Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "When I clearly see benefits all the time in what people consider to be severity and without which I cannot proceed forward, why should I not opt for it? What can I do if the wickedness of an evil is not settling in the mind without severity? My severity is only understood when I force a person to have himself rectified by me and he is compelled into getting himself rectified by me. There is absolutely no imposition on anyone here."

Respect Is Maintained Even When The Bond Is Severed

Every person has the right to sever his bond with me whenever he likes and to establish a bond of rectification with whomever he has affinity. In fact, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am the only one who takes special consideration of the seeker in the sense that when I do not expect him to derive any benefit from me, I clearly say to him to go to someone else. I even say to him: "If you want to know the whereabouts of any particular mentor, I will inform you. If you want to know his name, I will tell you that as well." I take so much of consideration of him at the exact time of severing the bond that I do not place the entire burden onto him. When I sever a bond because of an absence of affinity, I do it because there can be no benefit from a shaykh without affinity. Although it is an obscene example, but an example is solely to simplify an issue. That is why there is no harm in relating it. The doctors unanimously state that as long as the sperm and egg do not coincide, a child cannot be conceived even if both – husband and wife – are healthy and strong. In the same way, even if the shaykh and the seeker are both sound, the absence of concord between their dispositions will result in the relationship being futile. It is best to sever such a bond. A union without affinity is not only unbeneficial but also results in suspicion from both parties.

If a seeker does not have affinity with any specific shaykh, it is no proof of a defect in the seeker because dispositions are naturally different. Some people have affinity with certain persons, and others with other persons. Whatever the case may be, the basis is benefiting from the affinity. It may well be that a shaykh and murīd of differing temperaments may have their respective capabilities to perfection and both may be righteous, but the absence of affinity in their temperaments would cause suspicion if the two were to establish a bond. This is similar to soda and tartaric acid. As long as the two are kept separated, there is absolute calm. No sooner they are mixed, the calm is changed to a turbulence. It is neither the fault of the soda nor of the tartaric acid. Absence of affinity is the cause. It is therefore best for both to stay away from each other.

In the same way, when I sever a bond with a seeker, it is not because of a defect in him but because of an absence of mutual affinity. In fact, I consider a seeker to be a thousand times better than me because I am fully aware of my own condition but not of his. It may well be that he is accepted in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā*. This is why I consider every Muslim to be better than myself.

The Reason For Severing A Bond

I sever a bond with a seeker so that he could revert to someone else. If he cannot benefit from me because of an absence of affinity, why should I deprive him of deriving benefit elsewhere? Severing a bond based on absence of affinity is supported from a clear text. The clarity is found in the following statement which Hadrat Khidr *ʿalayhis salām* made to Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām*:

هٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنِكَ

This is the parting point between me and you.[1]

The parting between the two was solely because of an absence of affinity and not because of disobedience. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

> Now that you have held on to him, you must remain obedient to him. Become like Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis*

[1] Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 78.

salām who remained obedient to Hadrat Khidr *ʿalayhis salām*.

Remain patient over the actions of Hadrat Khidr *ʿalayhis salām* so that he does not have to say to you: This is the parting point between me and you.

Do not say anything even if he damages the ship. Do not utter a word of complaint even if he kills the child.

A Sign Of Affinity With A Shaykh

Some people asked me: What is the sign of affinity or lack of it with a shaykh? I replied: Although it is to do with personal taste, I will explain it to you in words. A sign of affinity with a shaykh is that a seeker must not have any objection, doubt or hesitation with regard to any statement or action of the shaykh. (An apprehension in which one is certain of the error of the opposite party is not considered). So much so, even if he cannot comprehend an explanation to his statement or action (because to try to comprehend it is the first step), he must still not have any objection to it in his heart. Instead, he must convince himself into thinking that he [the shaykh] is also a human. Even if any of his statement or action is a sin, so what? He can be pardoned through repentance or the mere grace of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the fine distinction between hesitation and apprehension. Hadrat Wālā himself praised his own above explanation by way of mentioning Allāh's favours on him. He said: "It is solely the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* that He bestowed me with the ability to explain matters which concern emotions and feelings. There are many senior scholars today. Ask them to explain the difference between hesitation and apprehension and see if they can give a convincing answer."

What Should A Person Do If He Has Objections Against His Shaykh?

Hadrat Wālā also said with regard to the above-mentioned subject: If a person has objections and misgivings against his shaykh, he must realize that he has no affinity with him. He must leave the shaykh without causing him any anxiety. The basis for deriving benefit is focus and good faith, and these are not possible in the presence of objections and misgivings. It is therefore more appropriate to leave him. But the seeker must

never be disrespectful to him for the rest of his life. After all, he was the one who had initially placed you on the path; and in this sense, he is your benefactor. In fact, even if he does things which appear to be against the Sunnah – but there is the possibility of independent judgement in them, no matter how far-fetched – he must still not be disrespectful towards him.

In short, in the case where there is no affinity, I consider it a betrayal of trust to keep a seeker confused under me merely so that the number of my disciples does not drop. I have seen some people who have no affinity with anyone nor is it expected of them to have affinity with anyone. I have found a way for them as well, because this is the way of Allāh *taʿālā*. No seeker can remain deprived in this path. I say to such people: Continue acquiring knowledge of the essentials of Dīn either through reading or asking the 'ulamā'. Continue performing your salāh, keeping fast, etc. Whatever internal spiritual ailments you perceive, you must treat them according to your own understanding. Abstain from the major sins. Continue seeking forgiveness for the remaining ones and pray to Allāh *taʿālā* thus: "O Allāh! Enable me to become conscious of them [minor sins] and to be able to treat them. If I do not have the ability to understand them, rectify them for me solely through Your grace." You are not answerable for anything more. When there is so much of latitude in my programme, and everyone knows whatever "severity" and leniency there is in it, and a person still comes to me for rectification, then if he falls into severity it is because of his own self. If anyone finds this severity to be irksome, he should not come here in the first place.

Rectification Of A Villager

I am relating an incident here so that the reader can gauge the type of severity which is found in Hadrat Wālā. An old villager travelled some distance, presented himself before Hadrat Wālā and said something. Because he was a villager, his language could not be understood and he did not know Urdu well enough.

Hadrat Wālā said: "I do not understand what you are saying. Call someone else and convey whatever you have to say through him." The man came back after a short while and said something again. Hadrat Wālā asked: "Are you the same person whom I had asked to bring someone to speak on your

behalf?” He replied: “Yes. But I could not find anyone who could speak on my behalf.” Hadrat Wālā said: “Then you should have told me that you could not find anyone. You should not have come back and related your condition to me despite my prohibition. Did I waste my time in asking you to bring someone to speak on your behalf.” He said: “I made a mistake.”

Hadrat Wālā addressed those who were present in the assembly: “Look! People err in even simple matters as this. When I had laid down a prerequisite of bringing an interpreter and he could not find one, he should have first told me that he could not find anyone. He made no mention of that and began describing his situation to me. The fact of the matter is that people do not use their power of thinking. If not, the most ignorant person would have understood this procedure.”

“I constantly say that man is a man because of his ability to think. The only difference between a man and an animal is that Allāh *taʿālā* gave man the ability to think and not to an animal. Man can think of possibilities while an animal cannot. The philosophers define a man as an animal who has the power of speech. I feel he should be defined as a thinking animal.”

In other words, a man who does not use his power of thinking and does not think of possibilities is not a man; he is an animal in the form of a human. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says with regard to such humans:

> If a human being were to be a perfect human solely by having the form of a human, (Hadrat) Ahmad (*sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) and Abū Jahal would have been equal.
>
> What you are seeing contradicts humaneness. This is not a human, it is the covering of a human.

Hadrat Wālā then turned to the villager and said: “Only if you tell me that you could not find an interpreter will I give you a reply.” The villager then said this to him. Hadrat Wālā sent someone to call Khalīfah Iʿjāz Sāhib who is a teacher in the Madrasah of the Khānqāh and said to the latter: “Ask him [the villager] what he has to say.” The villager replied through Khalīfah Iʿjāz Sāhib: “I have come here to spend some time with Hadrat Wālā and to listen to Hadrat Wālā’s talks.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Tell me in full who you are and what work you do.”

The villager: “I was studying the Qur’ān in Madrasah Ashrafīyyah in Pānīpat.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Why did you give up the Qur’ān to come here? Studying the Qur’ān is more necessary.”

The villager: “I will continue reading the Qur’ān here as well.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Under whom?

The villager: “Under such and such person who also studied in Pānīpat.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Did you obtain his approval first or are you going to impose on him?

The villager: “I asked him.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Ask him in my presence.”

The person was present in the assembly at the time, so he promised Hadrat Wālā that he would teach the villager.

Hadrat Wālā turned to the villager once again: “Very well, how many days will you be spending here?”

The villager: “Two months.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Do you have money for your meal arrangements?”

The villager: “Yes.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Did you obtain permission from your teacher before coming here? Have you displeased him and come here?”

The villager: “I came after obtaining his permission.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Will you be able to obtain a letter of permission from him?”

The villager: “Yes, I can obtain it.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Within how many days will you get the reply?”

The villager: “Four days.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Okay, instead of four days, I will give you a chance of eight days so that it may be easy for you. Today is Wednesday, you must obtain a letter from him by next

Wednesday in which he states that you left after obtaining his permission. If you do not show me the letter by next Wednesday, you will have to leave.”

After this entire conversation, Hadrat Wālā addressed the villager once again.

Hadrat Wālā: “Have you read any of my books?

The villager: “No. I can neither read Urdu nor do I understand it very well. I am only studying the Qur’ān.”

Hadrat Wālā: “If you do not understand Urdu how are you going to understand my talks? Anyway there is no harm in this. There are others sitting in this assembly, you must also remain seated. But I am worried that you might misunderstand something.”

The villager: “I will not misunderstand.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Very well. But you must promise me you will not relate anything which you heard from me to anyone for the rest of your life.”

The villager: “Very well.”

This entire conversation took place through the interpreter. In the course of the conversation, Hadrat Wālā was providing a commentary to those who were present. He said to them: “I posed these questions so that no aspect of rectification and reformation is left out. Rectification can be completed and all grey areas cleared. These are not questions but teachings. I asked him to obtain his teacher’s permission so that a person does not consider himself to be free as regards his actions and deeds. Whatever a person does must be done after constant consultation with his elders. Furthermore, I asked him to obtain permission so that the respect of the teacher develops in the heart.”

Hadrat Wālā finally said: “Here, this is my severity. People consider proper procedures and arrangements to be severity. Now tell me, what benefit was there to me in asking these questions? They were posed solely to set right his Dīn. However, at the same time, my own Dīn improved because I also received the reward of rectification.”

A Treatment For Not Being Able To See One's Own Faults

Another incident occurred in the same week. A very pious mason who has a bond with Hadrat Wālā since a long time presented himself in the Khānqāh and handed a note in which he said the following: "I have studied [Hadrat Wālā's] lectures and also *Tablīgh Dīn* [name of a book] but I cannot see my own faults. I would like to stay in Hadrat's company so that I am able to identify my faults but I have the obligation of seeing to my wife and children. I am an employed artisan, so it is difficult for me to stay over."

Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "If you were to stay with me, you will not learn anything more about your faults because I do not look for faults in anyone. Since you cannot see your own faults, it is the same whether you stay here or not." Hadrat Wālā added: "If you cannot even see your own faults then you are excused. Just continue praying to Allāh."

After writing this reply, Hadrat Wālā reprimanded and scolded the man severely in the presence of everyone in the morning assembly. Hadrat Wālā gauged from his situation that his statement about not being able to see his own faults stemmed from self-conceit. He therefore scolded him in such a manner that he came back to his senses and his mind was set right. Hadrat Wālā then delivered a long and fervent lecture which affected not only the man but all who were present. As I said, the man is a very pious man, so he was never reprimanded in this manner before, and Hadrat Wālā had always spoken to him in a soft and affectionate manner.

Unfortunately, neither I nor Janāb Hāfiz Jalīl Ahmad Sāhib – who is living in the Khānqāh since a long time and who pens certain special assemblies – was present at the time. When the two of us heard the praises of this assembly by most of those who were present, we continued asking and questioning them until we gathered a few special aspects. The gist of these is related here.

Hadrat Wālā said: "I am astonished that you cannot see your own faults. Whereas, I take an oath in Allāh's name that if a person's conscience is correct, then let alone his sins, he will even consider his acts of obedience to be acts of disobedience."

Hadrat Wālā then went into a fervour, took an oath three times and said: "I suspect the absence of sincerity in my salāh, my

fasting, my every deed, and – in fact – even in my īmān. We are nothing. Who can be more sincere than the Sahābah? A Hadīth states that there were seventy of those who participated in the Battle of Badr who feared that they were hypocrites.”

“Such was the condition of the Sahābah, and this Hadrat here does not see any faults in himself?! This is the height of senselessness.”

The man said: “I know that I have faults but I cannot identify them.”

Hadrat Wālā said: “Glory to Allāh! This is similar to saying: I know I have a pain in my body but I do not know where it is and what type it is. Is it in my stomach, in my head or in my hands and feet? What foolishness! If a person feels a pain, can he not identify where it is? This is worse than senselessness.”

Hadrat Wālā added: “In my reply to your note I wrote that if you cannot even see your own faults then you are excused. This is a reply given if we had to accept that a person cannot see his own faults.”

You wrote in your note to me that you read my lectures and also studied *Tablīgh Dīn* but still could not identify your faults. Do you think that faults are identified merely by reading books? Nothing is achieved from books unless their effects are absorbed. This is similar to a press which prints copies of the Qur’ān and copies of Hadīth as well. The press does not take any effect from printing those copies.

Hadrat Wālā also said: If a person were to appoint someone to monitor him and to inform him of any of his faults, this too will not be entirely sufficient because in most cases, if the person likes you, he will see your faults as merits; and if dislikes you, he will see your merits as faults. If a person has some pride over his deeds and conditions, and does not see any defect whatsoever in them, he must meditate and imagine himself to be right before Allāh *taʿālā* who is watching every deed and condition of his. He must then ponder and think to himself: “Is every deed and condition of mine worthy of presentation before Allāh *taʿālā* without any hesitation?” The person will then see the reality of his deeds. By Allāh, will there be any such deed which will be worthy of being presented to Him? Look at just one salāh and to what extent we fulfil its rights. Leave aside the humility and servitude which are a bit difficult, we commit

shortcomings even in the presence of mind which is not difficult at all.

Hadrat Wālā continued speaking on this subject for a long time with much fervour and passion, and continued scolding the man. He eventually said to him: "You are no longer permitted to write any letter to me nor do you have the permission to come here until you begin seeing your own faults. And that too, not just one or two faults, but many faults. Although I will only treat one fault at a time when the time comes for you to be treated, I will only commence the treatment after you send me a long and detailed list of your faults. During this period, you are only permitted to write to me to ask about my well-being and to request for prayers. You are not permitted any other contact."

This impressive lecture was delivered in the afternoon and the man departed soon thereafter. On his return to his hometown, he wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā. His letter and Hadrat Wālā's reply is quoted verbatim from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. The reader will be able to gauge the effect which Hadrat Wālā's single reprimand had and how his condition changed completely. Look at how a destructive spiritual ailment – which ought to be referred to as a tuberculosis because a person suffering from it does not consider himself to be ill – was uprooted with just one bitter prescription. Initially, the man could not see a single fault within himself, but when his eyes really opened, he saw nothing but faults. He became so convinced about the existence of those faults that he is prepared to take oaths that he has them. Previously he considered his heart to be a varnished box which was filled with valuables, and now he saw the same heart to be completely immersed in filth. The fat which had accumulated on his eyes for so many years now melted with a single flame. The man's letter and Hadrat Wālā's reply is now presented to the reader.

The Man's Letter

Ever since I returned from Thānah Bhawan, I have been carrying out every deed with reflection, pondering and introspection. Hadrat mentioned in his special assembly that when I do any deed, I must think to myself if I can do it right before Allāh *taʿālā* or not. By implementing this advice, I realized that whatever I say and do is all worthless. No deed of mine is worthy of presentation before Allāh *taʿālā*. Previously I

could not see my own faults. This was solely out of disregard and inattentiveness. After Hadrat's reprimand, I realized that my heart which I had considered to be a varnished box filled with unique and priceless items, was really filled with excreta and nothing else. I therefore repented from my previous assumption that I cannot see any faults in myself. The effect of Hadrat's reprimand was that I began seeing my faults very clearly and I can take the most solemn oaths that I have these faults in me. I now seek permission to present my faults to Hadrat and request a treatment for them.

Hadrat Wālā's Reply

Congratulations. This excreta of submission will mix with the soil, turn to manure, and will result in the sprouting of various types of spiritual foods. I am praying for you and permit you to present your faults to me. However, do not present more than one fault in a letter.

Glory to Allāh! Look at what a beautiful reply and the fine manner in which he changed the man's grossness to exquisiteness. He did not do it just metaphorically but literally.

The ability to express the reality in an appealing metaphorical sense without changing the reality is an ability which I saw in none but Hadrat Wālā. There are countless examples of this which are filled in Hadrat Wālā's writings and speeches. I am not quoting them here for fear of lengthiness.

Every Person Is Not Worthy Of Good Treatment

When the above-quoted letter of the mason reached Hadrat Wālā [and he read it] he handed it over to me and said: "Here, the mason has come to his senses. He was never reprimanded before because he is a righteous person. This is why he considered himself to be completely devoid of faults."

Hadrat Wālā went on to say: "Every person is not worthy of good treatment. People tell me not to be harsh and severe. How can I not be such when they cannot be rectified without severity? Look at the mason's case. Kind treatment of ten to twelve years did not reform him in any way. It actually caused him to deteriorate. But ten to twelve minutes' of scolding put him right. His mind was set in order and the devil in him came out. Do you think he could have been reformed without severity? Never. Let the people now open their eyes and look

carefully, and ask themselves if this situation demanded consideration and leniency. Do they think that rectification can be achieved through softness and leniency in every situation? If an ailment requires a laxative, can it be treated with stimulants? Those who advise me to be soft towards the seekers are similar to a person advising me to give a stimulant to a patient who actually needs a laxative. Or an abscess which is filled with harmful substances and needs to be surgically removed but people advise that it should be merely anointed and bandaged even if it means allowing the harmful substances to spread inside and then cause the entire body to rot. They will tolerate that but not the removal of all the harmful substances in a single operation."

The Difference Between A Patient And A Visitor

Hadrat Wālā was speaking on a similar subject on another occasion. He said: "Two types of people go to a doctor. (1) The one who is there merely to meet the doctor. He is given a special seat, the two engage in a jovial conversation, he is offered something to drink, he is presented with betel leaf and cardamom, a perfume is offered to him, and so on. (2) The one who is there to be treated. He is made to sit in the queue of sick people, he is not given the opportunity to speak more than necessary, and bitter medicines are prescribed for him. If anyone complains in this regard, he is sent out of the clinic. If a sick person feels he should be treated in the same manner as the one who merely came for a social visit, then it is really foolishness on his part because he will not achieve the objective for which he came to the clinic in the first place, i.e. to be treated and regain his health. In fact, if he is suffering from colic and he is given a sherbet drink, his colic will worsen and lead him to death."

The Need For Planning In Every Situation

Hadrat Wālā said on the same subject: "Planning is essential – not only in Sufism – but in every part of life. For a teacher to punish his student, parents to hit their children for the sake of discipline, rulers to punish their subjects and criminals are generally accepted without any reservation." There were times when Hadrat Wālā resorted to severity and said: "Look! This severity removed ignorance. If prevailing norms are given

preference over prudence, it would mean that people will have to remain in ignorance for their entire lives."

A Person Suffering From Casting Evil Glances Is Treated

Incidents similar to the ones related previously are observed and witnessed all the time. How much more can I write? I myself know of many incidents in which Hadrat Wālā's diplomacy completely uprooted severe illnesses from the seekers in a matter of a few moments. A seeker who had a special bond with Hadrat Wālā began suffering from casting evil glances. He was so overwhelmed by it that it seemed impossible to free himself from it. When he could not find any way out by himself, he reverted to Hadrat Wālā by writing to him. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "You knew all the different treatments for it. I could not think of what new treatment to prescribe. I did not write the full reply because I was waiting for Allāh *taʿālā* to inspire me with a new treatment. Today, in the fajr salāh, Allāh *taʿālā* placed a new treatment in my heart. Since you do not know it, I am writing it here. Allāh willing, it will be of benefit to you. The treatment is that if you commit this mistake, you are not permitted to write to me for two months. Each time you cast an evil gaze will result in a separate two months. For example, if you cast evil gazes six times in one day, you are not permitted to correspond with me for one full year. In short, when the punishment for one error ends, the next one will commence."

The moment these guidelines reached the person, his entire situation changed. He took so much precautions that when he used to walk in public, he would place his hand over his forehead [like a cap] so that he could see nothing but the ground. If he had any need to look at anything or anyone, he would open his eyelids very slightly so that he cannot identify who is approaching – whether it is a man or a woman. The prohibition of corresponding with Hadrat Wālā was extremely difficult for him because of his special bond with him. This is why he made a firm resolution that – Allāh willing – he will not allow this punishment to be meted out to him even once in his life. He wrote to Hadrat Wālā and informed him of what steps he had taken to prevent this from happening. Hadrat Wālā was very pleased and wrote back saying: "I too expected from Allāh *taʿālā* that it would not come down to punishment even once."

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, the sin which appeared to be impossible to give up now became impossible to commit. The man was completely cured from such an evil and major sin. Hadrat Wālā added in his letter to the man: "It is not necessary to go to extremes. It is enough not to cast a gaze wittingly."

A Seeker's Admission

A seeker was involved in an evil and was warned about it. He then spoke about the excellent manner in which Hadrat Wālā steered him and the benefit which he derived from his supervision. He wrote: "The committing of that evil does not even cross my mind. I have strong hope that through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, I will never commit this evil."

There are countless incidents and observations of this nature. Hadrat Wālā receives many letters of affirmation of this type. Hadrat Wālā periodically reads these letters to those who are present without divulging the identity of those who wrote the letters. He uses them as proofs of the benefit of his system of rectification through diplomacy, and silences those who make objections against this system. These incidents and observations are ample testimony to the effectiveness of Hadrat Wālā's system and his brilliance in the sense that the devil is immediately removed from such people, their minds are enlightened, and all satanic thoughts disappear.

Like his other qualities, this quality of Hadrat Wālā was inherited from his forefather, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* from whose mere approach Satan used to flee. The following statements of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* are testimonies in this regard:

عن أنس رضي الله عنه: الشيطان يفر من حس عمر رضي الله عنه[1]

Anas radiyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates: Satan flees from the mere perception of ʿUmar* radiyallāhu ʿanhu.

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن الشيطان يفر من عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه.[2]

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[1] كنز العمال بحوالة ديلمي.

[2] كنز العمال، تاريخ حاكم.

'Ā'ishah raḏiyallāhu 'anhā *narrates: Satan flees from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṯṯāb* raḏiyallāhu 'anhu.

إني لأنظر إلى شياطين الجن والإنس قد فروا من عمر رضي الله عنه.[1]

I see the devils from jinn and mankind fleeing from 'Umar raḏiyallāhu 'anhu.

إن الشيطان ليخاف منك يا عمر.[2]

O 'Umar! Satan is terrified of you.

يا ابن الخطاب، والذي نفسي بيده ما لقيك الشيطان سالكًا فَجًّا إلا سلك فجا غير فجك.

O Ibn al-Khaṯṯāb! When Satan sees you going on a particular path, he most certainly takes a different path [in order to avoid you].

Speaking Out The Truth Must Result In Objectors

There is an Arabic saying which says: "The truth is bitter." A reformer who is so frank in speaking out the truth can never be loved by all despite possessing all the causes of adoration. This has been a continuous practice when it comes to reformers of the Muslim community. Haḏrat Imām Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh* exposed the wrongs of the 'ulamā' and spiritual masters without fearing any criticism. This is especially so in his *Kitāb al-Ghurūr*. Consequently, fatwās of unbelief were issued against him and his book, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, was burnt. Later on, when the truth became manifest, the disrespect which was shown to him was tried to be atoned by writing the very book which was burnt with golden ink. When relating this incident, Haḏrat Wālā says: "Based on the principle that contemporariness results in mutual dislike, people disapprove of my style of rectification. Allāh willing, they will value and appreciate it later on, and offer it as a proof. I have borne disrepute for myself and cleared the way for others."

This special methodology is supported by a Ḥadīth which is related to Haḏrat 'Umar *raḏiyallāhu 'anhu* himself. The Ḥadīth, its translation and Haḏrat Wālā's explanation is quoted here.

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[1] مشكوة باب مناقب عمر رضي الله عنه.

[2] أيضا.

عن علي رضي الله عنه قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: رحم الله عمر يقول الحق وإن كان مرا تركه الحق وما له من صديق.

May Allāh taʿālā *send down His special mercy on ʿUmar. He speaks the truth even if it may be (rationally or naturally) bitter (and unpleasant). (This quality is overwhelming in him on a special level. His frankness in speaking the truth has made him such that he does not have such a type of friend who (normally remains with a person who overlooks and concedes).*

The explanations in the translation remove three doubts. (1) Did other Companions *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* not possess this quality of speaking out the truth? (2) Did ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* not have any friend? (3) Where there people in this excellent group [of Sahābah] who considered the truth to be bitter?

The answer to the first question is that the essential quality was found in all the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, but when it is overwhelmingly found on a special level in a person, then specific merits with regard to them are mentioned. There are different levels of the truth. One level is when expressing it is obligatory. The next one is when expressing it is preferable. The first level is found in all the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, in fact, in all people of the truth. As for the second level, the pious elders respond to it differently. Some of them give preference to politeness over prudence, and therefore remain silent. Others respond in the opposite manner and therefore say whatever they have to say. The first level is when the quality is overwhelming in a person while the second is of the actual quality itself.

The answer to the second question is that a special type of friendship is negated. In other words, had Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* gave preference to politeness over prudence, he would have had friends similar to him, but not in the present situation.

The answer to the third question is that natural bitterness and offence, and not practising on its demands does not negate goodness. You do get some people in every era who also experience rational bitterness, even though they were very few at the time. My concise explanations in the translation make reference to all these answers.

Maulānā Hamīd Hasan Sāhib Replies To An Objector

I recall another incident which supports Hadrat Wālā's method of rectification. A naïve objector said to Maulānā Hamīd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī, a teacher at Madrasah Saʿīdīyyah Jalālābād, that – Allāh forbid – Hadrat Wālā does not have Akhlāq-e-Muhammadī (the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*). Look at the beautiful reply which the Maulānā gave to this objector: "My dear fellow, do you know the entire list of the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* or do you know certain specific ones? Pick up any book of Hadīth and you will find that apart from other chapters, it also contains chapters on the meting out of punishments, retributions and chastisements. These are also part of the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* Resorting to diplomacy when needed and meting out punishment when crimes are committed are included in the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*"

Reprimand Becomes A Source Of Affection

In the light of all the above, the reader must have understood fully well that Hadrat Wālā's method of rectification is totally in line with sound disposition and the age-old practice of the righteous predecessors, and in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Clear proofs and evidences for this were given in detail. Despite this, Hadrat Wālā always has a critical eye towards his self. Although he resorts to diplomacy whenever the situation demands it, after every such incident he expresses his sorrow and regret by his words, conditions and actions. In fact, there were times that this sorrow and regret prevented him from falling asleep at night. There were also times when I personally saw Hadrat Wālā asking the person to pardon him, and making up for it with monetary atonements on other occasions. I always saw and personally experienced that his disapproval was a key to additional affection, attention and special prayers for the person. The person who is reprimanded himself perceives spiritual progress after Hadrat Wālā's treatment. To sum up, Hadrat Wālā's reprimanding is a manifestation of the following supplication of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَتَّخِذُ عِنْدَكَ عَهْدًا لَّنْ تُخْلِفَنِيْهِ فَاِنَّمَا اَنَا بَشَرٌ، فَاَيَّمَا مُؤْمِنٍ اٰذَيْتُهُ اَوْ شَتَمْتُهُ اَوْ جَلَّدْتُّهُ اَوْ لَعَنْتُهُ، فَاجْعَلْهَا لَهُ صَلوٰةً وَّزَكوٰةً وَّقُرْبَةً تُقَرِّبُهُ بِهَا اِلَيْكَ.

O Allāh! I am taking from You a promise which You must never go back on. I am only a human. Therefore, whichever Muslim I harm, abuse, strike or curse; make it in his favour a [source of] mercy, purity, and a means of gaining proximity to You.

Preference Is Given To A Seeker's Wellbeing

Hadrat Wālā repeatedly says with regard to his style of rectification: "It is completely against my nature. It is followed by distress and regret. I think to myself: 'Instead of addressing him in the manner in which I did, I could have addressed him in this way. Instead of explaining to him in this manner, I could have done it in that manner. Instead of resorting to this method, I could have resorted to that.' However, at the exact time, the expedience of rectification supersedes everything else and I do not look at any other expedience. This only applies when I consider it my responsibility to rectify. If I ever disregard this responsibility, then – Allāh willing – I will always display fine character. My fundamental objective is to have nothing to do with anyone and to remain secluded from all."

Noble Thoughts About Objectors

It was also because of his self-criticism that Hadrat Wālā never tried to refute those who raised objections against him. Instead, if he felt that any of the objections were valid – especially those which were made with good intentions – he would accept them and act accordingly.

Hadrat Wālā Reviews His Methodology Because Of An Objector

In consideration of the above, Hadrat Wālā reviews his methodology periodically. This is borne out from his book, *at-Tabdīl min at-Tathqīl ilā at-Taʿdīl*, which Hadrat Wālā wrote just recently in response to a letter of objection written by an immature adviser. It contains details about Hadrat Wālā's change in his manner of rectification in consideration of ill-feeling from certain quarters. Hadrat Wālā then summarized it, had the summary written by a calligrapher, and keeps it in front of him so that he is conscious of it, does not forget when the time comes, and it becomes easy for him to adhere to the methodology which he laid down. From this we can gauge how

much importance Hadrat Wālā attached to personally practising on essential rules and regulations. The above-mentioned article, its addendum, the above-mentioned adviser's repentance and Hadrat Wālā's reply will – Allāh willing – be quoted soon from *Ahsan al-ʿAzīz*.

The Objector Repents

Firstly, the objector, in his fervour for revenge, was overcome by his self and wrote whatever he liked. At the same time, in order to put a veil over his egotism, he assured Hadrat Wālā of his well-wishing, love and sincere intention. But soon thereafter, through the blessing of studying Hadrat Wālā's book, *at-Takashshuf*, his eyes opened automatically, he came to his senses, and wrote a letter of repentance immediately. It will be quoted soon. In it, he expresses and acknowledges his evils in clear and explicit words. He makes mention of his own wretchedness, humiliation, audacity, boldness, hypocrisy, fanaticism, obstinacy, deprivation, loss in both worlds, eligibility for reprimand, Hadrat Wālā's correctness, his own uselessness as a rectifier, and the impossibility of atonement for his crime. Finally, he expresses his regret and remorse, and requests for pardon. He is not the only one. There are countless others who retracted from their objections and acknowledged their mistakes. This shows that the truth always triumphs.

Divine Punishment Befalls Objectors

Some of the objectors retracted once they understood the reality. Others became prone to divine punishments and calamities as a result of their audaciousness and ill-feelings. Peace, tranquillity, yearning, enthusiasm and all other forms of happiness and contentment disappeared from their hearts. They became losers internally and externally, and were compelled into regret and repentance.

Despite this, Hadrat Wālā – in all his humility – considered these punishments which befell them to be incidental. He never considered himself to be of such a level [where calamities befall people who taunt him], and also because this is not Allāh's continuous practice. He said to those who considered the calamities to be the consequences of their disrespect towards him that they were wrong. However, as per the Hadīth:

I declare war on the one who antagonizes My friend.

And the statements of the spiritual masters:

> We experienced reward and punishment on many occasions in this world. Those who remained with the residue have always risen to the top.
>
> Allāh *taʿālā* did not disgrace a nation as long as it did not hurt the feelings of His friends.

Those who hurt and taunt the friends of Allāh *taʿālā* are, in most cases, made to suffer spiritual and physical pains and calamities. Sometimes, they themselves realize and perceive this. Some of them realize their folly and repent.

The Harm Of Disrespecting A Shaykh

To be audacious and disrespectful especially after becoming a murīd makes one even more eligible for calamities. Hadrat Wālā himself says in this regard: "In this relationship, in certain aspects sinning is not as harmful as disrespect. The reason for this is that sinning is connected to Allāh *taʿālā*. Since He is pure from being affected by sinning, a person is pardoned once he repents and his previous bond with Allāh *taʿālā* is re-established as it had been. On the other hand, disrespect is when it is towards one's shaykh who is a human. A seeker's disrespect towards him creates ill-feeling in his heart. This ill feeling is an obstacle to receiving the blessings of the shaykh."

Hadrat Wālā continues: "Hadrat Hājī Sāhib explains this with a beautiful example. He says: If mud is loaded on the drain of a roof, and then it rains, then although the water which falls on the roof is absolutely pure and clear, when it goes through the drain and comes down the pipe, it will be dirty and murky. In the same way, when the blessings and effulgence which descend into the heart of a shaykh are transferred into the heart of a seeker who caused the heart of his shaykh to be murky towards him, they will be transferred in a murky form. Instead of the seeker's heart being illuminated and purified, it will continue becoming murkier."

Hadrat Wālā adds: The disastrous effect of disturbing the heart of one's shaykh is that a seeker never experiences peace of heart in this world. He remains restless throughout his life. However, since it is not necessary for every action which

causes displeasure to the shaykh to be a sin, the seeker's action does not result in any direct religious harm, but in most cases, becomes a means for indirect religious harm. The sequence of events are as follows: The displeasure of the shaykh results in the removal of peace and tranquillity from the seeker's heart. The absence of tranquillity causes shortcomings in actions. Shortcomings in actions result in religious harm and punishment in the Hereafter. If, in the case where the seeker has no tranquillity, he imposes on himself to do good deeds and takes the courage to continue in this way, he will not experience any religious harm. But in most cases, when there is no tranquillity, there are shortcomings in good deeds. This inevitably results in indirect religious harm. This is because the impetus – tranquillity – is no longer present. And most people find it difficult to carry out good deeds in the absence of an impetus."

Hadrat Wālā's Humility

Hadrat Wālā also says: "Although I am nothing, whenever I put my faith and confidence in any person and then displeased him in any way, then the same harms will result as happens when displeasing the spiritual masters and accepted servants."

I [the compiler] say: This is Hadrat Wālā's extreme humility. After all, the fact that he is a centre of guidance, at the head of the spiritual masters of the time, the noblest of the perfect accepted servants is clear as the light of day. Such complete and all-encompassing religious, spiritual and external blessings are not reaching the creation of Allāh *taʿālā* as they are from him. In fact, no one comes close to him in this regard. This is a glaring, clear and undeniable fact. Why should this not be the case when – according to the erudite scholars – it is the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* to place in the world an imām through whom the truth and falsehood is distinguished! Since he is there for the guidance of Allāh's servants, he is helped and supported by Allāh *taʿālā*. Therefore, whatever emanates from his mouth is always the truth. A personality of this type is honoured with such a special acceptance and love from Allāh *taʿālā* that if anyone in his era does not have faith and confidence in him, then although he is not a sinner, he is deprived of special blessings.

No pious personality of Hadrat Wālā's calibre has been externally seen in these times nor have we heard of anyone like

him. Therefore, we are almost convinced that Hadrat Wālā seems to be the manifestation of that continuous norm of Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best His mysteries and the mysteries of His friends.

As I had promised earlier, I am now quoting Hadrat Wālā's article titled, *at-Tabdīl min at-Tathqīl ilā at-Taʿdīl*, together with its addendum, the objector's letter of repentance and Hadrat Wālā's reply to it. It is quoted verbatim from *Ahsan al-ʿAzīz*.

At-Tabdīl Min at-Tathqīl Ilā at-Ta'dīl

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

On the 1st of Jumādā al-Ūlā 1354 A.H. I received a letter from a certain place in which the writer openly spoke out against my method of rectification and reformation, and requested me to follow the normal methods. I received several letters of this nature before this as well but none of them made claims to desiring good. I did not consider those letters to be worthy of much attention because of the obstinate tone in which they were written. However, I was influenced by them to a certain extent and I did make certain changes to my methodology. Furthermore, I am in the habit of casting a critical eye on my own condition, so this too had a special influence in making changes. [Hadrat Wālā makes references to *Ahsan al-ʿAzīz* in which he mentions some of these changes. These have not been translated]. However, this last letter which I received – although it is a clear testimony to the writers ignorance on the fundamentals and subsidiary matters of Sufism – the writer tries to convince me of his well-wishing, love and sincere intentions; and I have no right to refute these claims of his. Bearing in mind his ignorance and his antagonistic tone, and at the same time not considering my self to be free from dangers, I decided to look into this matter with special attention.

After looking into it I came to the conclusion that my present methodology is similar to that treatment of a physician who pays full attention to uprooting all the causes of the illness in order to attain perfect health. In order to realize this objective, he does not bother about the bitter medicines which he prescribes and the objections of the patient. He prescribes the most beneficial medicines, tries to make the patient abstain

from the most trivial harms, and expresses his displeasure over the patient's slightest shortcoming and disregard. If kindness is not beneficial, he resorts to sternness and severity.

As for the writer of this letter, his example is like an incomplete treatment given by a physician who is happy with the incomplete recovery of his patient, and only prescribes medicine which his patient takes happily. He is happy even though the illness has not been uprooted, but merely reduced; even if it returns with full force, or it was considerably reduced but not uprooted. This results in the illness returning to him. Similarly, the physician is lenient towards him with regard to what he can and what he cannot consume. He reprimands him for consuming destructive foods but permits him to consume those which could cause him to become more ill or weak.

This is the difference between my present methodology and the recommendation of the writer of this letter. As for the difference in the results between these two, it is crystal clear. In the first case, there is total benefit although it is not so widespread as a result of the ingratitude and ignorance of the patients. In the second case, the benefit is not total, although the large crowds of feeble-hearted and immature patients gives the impression that the benefit is widespread.

After looking at these differences, I pondered over my original methodology. I gave preference to it and opted for it because just as it is better as regards its objective, it is also better because it is in line with the principles of Sufism. The incidents related to the treatments adopted by the spiritual masters (of which there are thousands of examples in the books on this subject) clearly and unhesitatingly support this methodology. As for the Qur'ān and Sunnah, there is support from them with hesitation from some texts and no hesitation from most texts. These are mentioned in various places in my speeches and writings, and can be collectively found in *Masā'il as-Sulūk, Takashshuf* and *Tasharruf*.

Anyway, this had been my methodology based on the above-mentioned academic and practical preference. Nevertheless, as a precaution I still looked at another angle based on this letter which I received. The angle is as follows: I am bearing a heavy burden for the benefit of certain sick patients while they consider it burdensome. In such a situation, the extreme importance which the physician is attaching to his treatment is

a manifestation of the following verse: “can we impose it upon you while you are averse to it?”[1] which is really unnecessary. So in order to make it easy for both sides, I consider it appropriate to suffice with that amount which the patient can tolerate and to apprise him of his shortcomings so that I will, to a certain extent, protect myself from shirking my responsibility. The habits of the masses will also be taken into consideration. After that, they can themselves see what is beneficial to them and what is not. In such a situation, this type of rectification will be reduced to a normal and general propagation in which the following is said about the one doing the propagation:

قُلْ يٰاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَنِ اهْتَدٰى فَاِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِيْ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَاِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَمَا اَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ.

Say: O people! The truth from your Sustainer has reached you. Now, whoever comes onto the [straight] path, finds the path for his own good. And whoever wanders astray shall remain wandering astray to his own detriment. I am not responsible for you.[2]

As for the previous special method of rectification and disciplining, the following Hadīth applies:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُوْلٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

Each one of you is a shepherd and each one of you is accountable for his flock.

If I find anyone offended by my original method, it will be permissible for me to adopt another methodology because my relationship with the seekers is not one of a shepherd and his flock. Since the temperament of most of the seekers is as described, I have decided to adopt this permissible methodology. The people will be saved from bitter pills while I, in exchange for my burdens, will be saved from their verbal abuses. If anyone seeks total and complete benefit, this defective benefit coupled with my books will – Allāh willing – be sufficient for him. Why should I stress myself unnecessarily?

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[1] Sūrah Hūd, 11: 28.
[2] Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 108.

It is difficult to list the finer points and peculiarities of this new methodology. This article has been written to inform the people of this change in methodology. It can have two titles depending on which angle it is looked at. (1) I considered my previous methodology to be a balanced one. I now lowered myself and provided more concessions and ease. In such a case, its title will be *at-Tanzīl min at-Taʿdīl ilā at-Tas-hīl* (coming down from a balanced methodology to an easy one). (2) The objectors considered my previous methodology to be severe and heavy, and the new methodology to be a balanced one. In such a case, its title will be *at-Tabdīl min at-Tathqīl ilā at-Taʿdīl* (changing from a heavy methodology to one that is balanced). Since this change was made in consideration to the disposition of the masses, I am giving it the second title in consideration to them. Allāh *taʿālā* alone is our guide in all matters.

I know fully well that some objectors or immature associates will not be satisfied with even this much. They will suggest further ease and concessions. But I excuse myself from doing this because there is no further concession in the field of rectification. Instead, it will clearly entail giving up rectification entirely. However, if special circumstances demand the giving up of rectification completely, e.g. the presence of fully qualified reformers and rectifiers or – Allāh forbid – the absence of those who are worthy of rectification, then at such a time I will consider it permissible to give up. This refers to the giving up of general rectification. As for specific giving up of rectification, that can be done even now in the case where there is no affinity with a person.

The following verse is proof for the first case:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ اُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ اِلَى الْخَيْرِ

Let there be a group from among you inviting towards good.

The following Hadīth is proof for the second case:

إذا رأيت شحا مطاعا وهوى متبعا ودنيا موثرة وإعجاب كل ذي رأي برأيه فعليك بخاصة نفسك ودع أمر العامة.

If you see an avaricious person having a following, people obeying their desires, people giving preference to this world, and each person conceited about his own opinions, then worry about yourself only and cast aside the masses.

Hopefully, these are the last words on this subject. Our trust is solely in Allāh *taʿālā* in all our affairs.

3rd Jumādā al-Ūlā 1354 A.H.

Addendum

The reality of this change can only be gauged through observation. However, a short comparison between the past and present is provided for those who are to come.

Past	Present
1. If I had to say anything to a person, I would avoid using a third person to convey the message because of the possibility of changes in the original message (even if done unwittingly). I used to address the person directly, which sometimes caused the person to feel overwhelmed.	1. The person is apprised of his error through a third person. As far as possible, the person who is appointed to convey the message is one who is not expected to make any changes to it.
2. The reasons for the error used to be explained, and they appeared to be claims. Although they were explained without proofs, the natural effect of a claim is denial to accept one's error.	2. After getting the person to accept the preludes to the objective, he himself is made to accept the objective. Acceptance of the objective is really an acknowledgement from his side which naturally results in acceptance.
3. When approaching a person directly and he replies in an unprincipled manner, it used to result in my tone becoming sharp. A person lacking in understanding considered this to be displeasure, resulting in his grief and sorrow.	3. Now that I appoint an intermediary, there is no possibility of this happening. Instead of the person becoming grief-stricken, he feels ashamed.
4. Once my discussion ended with a person and I passed my decision, he was informed of it. This appeared to be like a governmental edict which sometimes resulted in ill-	4. After making the person accept his mistake, he is asked to decide for himself on what steps should be taken. If his decision is insufficient, its error is shown to him and he is

feeling.

asked to come up with a new decision. In most cases, after he makes a final decision, I provide further concessions which he considers to be a boon and accepts happily.

5. I used to issue a judgement immediately for several reasons: (1) It was my nature to do so. (2) Because of my many other occupations. (3) To save the person from the stress of having to wait. After passing my decision, there were times when I felt that there could be causes to review the case and the decision.

5. Bearing in mind the advantage of reviewing my decision, I give preference to it over the previously listed reasons, and delay slightly in passing my decision.

Despite the above, I neither consider my opinion to be the best nor am I proud over my past and present methodology. I am a human regarding whom Allāh *taʿālā* says:

خُلِقَ الْاِنْسَانُ ضَعِيْفًا

Man has been created weak.

خُلِقَ الْاِنْسَانُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ

Man has been created hasty.

This shows a defect in man's knowledge and actions. Anyway, my intention is still:

اِنْ اُرِيْدُ اِلَّا الْاِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ

All I want is rectification to the best of my capability.

Despite this, my prayer with regard to the above intention is:

وَمَا تَوْفِيْقِيْ اِلَّا بِاللهِ، عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَاِلَيْهِ اُنِيْبُ

My inspiration is solely from Allāh. I have placed my trust in Him and to Him do I turn.

Together with seeking forgiveness, I make this prayer which is derived from a teaching of Sālih ʿ*alayhis salām*:

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ رَبِّيْ ثُمَّ اَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ قَرِيْبٌ مُّجِيْبٌ

I seek forgiveness from my Sustainer. I then turn to Him in repentance. Surely my Sustainer is near, responding to my prayer.

The above steps and precautions are in the majority of the cases and, according to the principle, the sum total rule is applied to the majority. Thus, there is also the possibility of exception to the above rules either because of certain imposing reasons or due to forgetfulness. All these stages are only applicable where I expect affinity between myself and a seeker. If this is not the case, I will practise on the way of Khidr ʿ*alayhis salām* when he said:

هٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكَ

This is the point of separation between you and I.

Note: The very same objector's letter of repentance was received on 11 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1354 A.H. The letter and Hadrat Wālā's reply is quoted here.

The letter:

Respected and honourable Maulānā Sāhib…

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh wa ridwānuh

Sometime ago, this wretched fellow [referring to himself] came to Hadrat Wālā without permission. Your respected self reprimanded me severely for which you were fully entitled and I deserved. On returning to my place, I assumed the position of a rectifier and wrote a letter to you in which I stated that you should not have become so angry and annoyed. This was not the way of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. I used some very audacious words. This hypocrite [referring to himself] then read your explanations about harsh and obstinate persons in your book, *Takashshuf*. I am most ashamed of myself. I was most daring and bold in taking the loss in this world and the Hereafter. Will you pardon me – for Allāh's sake – for my audaciousness or is my crime unpardonable? Please pardon me.

The reply:

As-salāmu ʿalaykum

If by pardon you mean that I must not take you to account on the day of Resurrection, not curse you in this world, and abstain from back-biting you, then you are pardoned. Consequently, I did not mention your name to anyone nor the place where you live out of fear that someone might develop hatred for you. If by pardon you mean that I must have a relationship with you as I have with my friends, or permit you to correspond with me or come to meet me, then you are not pardoned so that you do not wrong anyone.

12 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1354 A.H.

Concern For The Objector's Welfare

One point needs to be pondered over. Despite the displeasure which Hadrat Wālā experienced on account of the objector's audacious tone and foolish objections, Hadrat Wālā did not even read the objector's letter to anyone. Instead, he tore it there and then as is his habit. He did not even give any indication to the objector's name and address. When I asked Hadrat Wālā the region where he lives, he refused to tell me. He said: "I do not want anyone to have any dislike for that region also, and I do not want my friends of that place to feel ashamed in any way."

Clarification Of A Fine Point

In his reply to the objector, Hadrat Wālā also taught us a very fine point, viz. pardon is one thing and meeting of the hearts is another. Gladness of the heart is not within one's control. There are some instances where it never returns once it leaves the heart. Hadrat Wālā quotes the incident of Hadrat Wahshī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in support of this. This incident is a clear text on this subject. Hadrat Wālā says: Whose heart can be more illuminated, pure, wide and open than the heart of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*? When his blessed heart did not experience any gladness from the Islam of Hadrat Wahshī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, who are we? This despite the fact that Hadrat Wahshī's *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* crime was certainly pardoned after he embraced Islam. After all, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself said:

الإسلام يهدم ما كان قبله

Embracing Islam destroys whatever was committed before it.

However, the nature of his crime was such that although he was pardoned, its effect in the form of grief remained in the blessed heart of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The reason for this was that Hadrat Wahshī had mercilessly martyred Hadrat Hamzah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in the Battle of Uhud. Whenever Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* looked at Hadrat Wahshī, he was immediately reminded of that scene and his heart experienced a sort of recoiling from him. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* eventually said to him:

هل تستطيع أن تغيب وجهك عني

Is it possible for you to keep your face away from me?

Hadrat Wahshī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* went away to Syria and, as per the request of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, never showed his face to him again. A poet says:

أُرِيْدُ وِصَالَهُ وَيُرِيْدُ هِجْرِيْ – فَأَتْرُكُ مَا أُرِيْدُ لِمَا يُرِيْدُ

I want to be with him but he wants to be aloof from me. I am therefore giving up my desire for his sake.

This incident is quoted from *Bukhārī Sharīf* from the chapter on the Battle of Uhud, under the heading, The Killing of Hamzah.

قال وحشي في حديث طويل: حتى قدمت على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فلما رآني قال: انت وحشي؟ قلت: نعم. قال: انت قتلت حمزة؟ قلت: قد كان من الأمر ما بلغك. قال: فهل تستطيع أن تغيب وجهك عني؟ قال: فخرجت...

Wahshī relates in a lengthy Hadīth: I eventually presented myself before Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. *When he saw me, he asked: "Are you Wahshī?" I replied: "Yes." He said: "You are the one who killed Hamzah?" I replied: "The information which you received is true." He said: "Is it possible for you to keep your face away from me?" I then departed…*

A few necessary aspects related to this incident are quoted from *Fath al-Bārī*:

فلما خرج وفد الطائف ليسلموا تغميت على المذاهب فقلت ألحق باليمن أو الشام أو غيرها. وفي رواية الطيالسي: فأردت الهرب إلى الشام. فقال لي رجل: ويحك، والله ما يأتي محمدا (صلى الله عليه وسلم) أحد بشهادة الحق إلا خلّى عنه. قال: فانطلقت فما شعر بي إلا وأنا قائم على رأسه أشهد بشهادة الحق. وأيضا في الفتح: وعند يونس بن بكير في المغازي عند ابن اسحاق قال: فقيل لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: هذا وحشي. فقال: دعوة رجل واحد للإسلام أحب إلي من قتل ألف كافر. وعند الطبراني فقال: يا وحشي أخرج فقاتل في سبيل الله كما كنت تصد عن سبيل الله.

When a delegation from Tā'if went to embrace Islam, I was at a loss as to where I should go. Should I go to Yemen, Syria or some other place?" A narration of Tayālisī states: "I decided to flee to Syria. A man said to me: 'What is it with you? No matter who goes to Muhammad [sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam] to testify to the truth, he lets him free.' So I decided to go to him. Before I could even realize it, I was standing before him and embracing Islam." Yūnus ibn Bukayr states in al-Maghāzī from Ibn Is-hāq who said: Someone said to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam: "This is Wahshī." So he said: "A single person inviting towards Islam is more beloved to me than killing a thousand unbelievers." A narration of Tabarānī states: "Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: O Wahshī! Go and fight in the cause of Allāh taʿālā as you had been keeping people away from His path [before you embraced Islam]."

The above incident shows that cheerfulness or gladness is not essential for pardon.

The Essentials Of Hadrat Wālā's Methodology

An essential point of caution has to be mentioned with regard to Hadrat Wālā's method of rectification, viz. every person is not capable of adopting this special method. Therefore, ordinary reformers and rectifiers should never dare emulate it. If not, their blind emulation would cause harm to themselves and their disciples as well. This method is only for those very special personalities who have extricated themselves completely from selfishness and are able to safeguard the limits fully. This special capability cannot be acquired through mere emulation.

Hadrat Shaykh Farīd ad-Dīn ʿAttār *rahimahullāh* has the following to say with regard to the person who emulates another blindly:

> You are a slave of your self. O you heedless fellow! Do not humiliate yourself. Even if a man of the heart had to consume poison, it turns to honey.

Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* explains the above as follows:

> The people of the heart do not suffer any harm even if they have to consume poison.
>
> A person who acquires total health does not have to exercise any caution [as regards what he consumes]. Whereas a poor seeker, he only remains upright when he suffers from a fever.
>
> He brought out a pearl from the depths of the ocean. He derived benefits from losses.
>
> When a spiritual master picks up a lump of soil, it turns to gold. When a novice picks up gold, it turns to soil.
>
> When ignorance comes before him, it turns to knowledge. When knowledge comes to a novice, the knowledge is reduced to ignorance.
>
> When a novice touches an illness he becomes sick himself. But if a master had to take unbelief, it becomes a Muslim.

He says elsewhere:

> Do not apply the affairs of pure people to yourself even if the words *sher* - شیر (lion) and *shīr* - شِیر (milk) are written in the same way.
>
> Two bees suck from the same place, but a sting is produced from one and honey from the other.
>
> A monkey can imitate a human and do as he does. It sees man doing something and imitates him immediately.

> It feels it was able to display the same actions to man. Where does it ever understand the difference between what is liked and what is disliked?

Hadrat Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* conveys the same theme as follows:

> Every person who reddens his face does not necessarily know how to beautify himself. Every person who holds a looking glass does not necessarily know how to run a kingdom.
>
> Every person who wears a crooked hat and sits up seriously does not necessarily know the principles of position and authority.
>
> There are thousands of mysteries which are finer than hair. Every clean shaven person does not necessarily know the Qalandar way.

In short, any person wanting to emulate Hadrat Wālā in this regard should first develop the quality of self-criticism on account of which Hadrat Wālā – despite being qualified in every way – constantly reviews his methodology. Furthermore, the person must also check to see if he has the kindness, affection, consideration, mercy and sympathy like Hadrat Wālā's. It is because of these qualities that every decision of Hadrat Wālā proves to be beneficial and blessed for the respective person or persons. Instead of recoiling from him and disliking him, the hearts are even more attracted towards him, and the crowds of seekers are increasing by the day.

I just recalled Hadrat Wālā's statement in this regard. A Maulānā read the following verse in reference to Hadrat Wālā's methodology:

وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيْظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوْا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

Had you been stern and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you.

The Maulānā used this verse to show that Hadrat Wālā's methodology needs to be abandoned. Hadrat Wālā replied: "But this verse actually supports my methodology and shows that I am not stern and hard-hearted. Had I been such, people would have definitely dispersed from around me. But this is not the

case here. This shows that sternness and hard-heartedness are not found in me. This verse is therefore in my favour.”

A Peculiar Benefit In Hadrat Wālā’s Methodology

There are many other benefits in Hadrat Wālā’s methodology. He says: “Had I adopted the general norms of character, there would have been such large crowds here that I would never have been able to render the Dīnī services which I did and which I am doing at present. In all the disorder and confusion [because of the large crowds], those who come here would not be able to derive any particular benefit from me. I would not have been able to differentiate the sincere ones from the insincere ones. It would have been just a hotchpotch of people. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* I have confidence in whoever I have at present because anyone and everyone cannot bear to remain with me.”

A Unique Incident Portraying Diplomacy With Consideration

There are countless incidents which portray Hadrat Wālā’s extreme level of consideration and safeguarding of limits. I will relate just two incidents and conclude this discussion which is becoming quite lengthy. I personally witnessed one of these incidents, and personally experienced the other.

On one occasion, a newly-arrived villager was severely reprimanded by Hadrat Wālā over some misdemeanour and asked to leave the assembly. The poor fellow thought that he was expelled so he began heading out of the Khānqāh. Hadrat Wālā scolded him again and said: “Where are you going? Why are you not going towards the musjid?”

I really admired Hadrat Wālā’s affection at this point. Look at his consideration even when he was angry. He is scolding the person, asking him to get up, but still does not sever ties with him. He does not permit him to leave the Khānqāh. He personally stops him from leaving. However, he did all this without allowing himself to lose sight of his authority.

The second incident concerns myself. Because of some misdemeanour of mine, Hadrat Wālā scolded me in the assembly which is conducted after zuhr. After the ʿasr salāh, but before the worshippers could depart, Hadrat Wālā addressed me: “Khwājah Sāhib, I am going out into the fields for a walk. Will you join me?” I replied: “Indeed.” Hadrat Wālā

remained sitting silently for some time. The worshippers too remained in their rows. Hadrat Wālā then got up and took me with him for a walk.

On the way, he explained the reason for this special treatment which he accorded to me. He said: "I had scolded you in front of all those people and it must have resulted in a drop in your status in their eyes. Taking you for a walk would make up for that." He then explained the reason for sitting for some time after asking me if I would join him for the walk. He said: "I only got up after my expression of special attention to you settled completely in the minds of all who were present. Had I got up immediately after saying it to you, they would neither have had an opportunity to think about it nor would it have had any effect on them."

Glory to Allāh! Look at his fine consideration to feelings. It certainly proves his expertise in the field of psychology.

Return To The Previous Subject

I had been describing Hadrat Wālā's arrival in a large assembly at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband and my own presence there. In the course of it, I touched on Hadrat Wālā's quality of awe and authority which I witnessed for the first time in this gathering. While mentioning this, I made reference to the awe and authority of a few personalities. This resulted in a lengthy discussion. Bearing in mind that it is a very important issue and people have many misunderstandings about it, I felt the need to discuss it from all angles.

I continued writing on this subject from the statements of Hadrat Wālā which I could recall easily and from his written works which were available to me. By the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, a huge treasure was compiled which I had never intended nor imagined. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Wālā's scholarly erudition and research acumen are well-known and accepted. No matter what issue he delves in – especially internal spiritual issues – he provides a comprehensive and absolute explanation without leaving out any of its different angles and without leaving room for anything more. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this treasure is therefore filled with many intricate points and facts, and is most sufficient and satisfying on this subject. It contains a reply to every doubt, a refutation of every objection, a remover

of every misunderstanding, and a rejection of every misgiving and doubt. Although this interjectory topic delayed the previous subject, all praise is due to Allāh, another important objective which is more in line with the present theme of spiritual teachings was realized.

My First Visit To Thānah Bhawan

I now return to the previous discussion on my attending the gathering in Deoband. I accompanied Hadrat Wālā to Thānah Bhawan at the end of this gathering. This was my first visit to Thānah Bhawan and my first opportunity of visiting Khānqāh Imdādīyyah Ashrafīyyah. It was a very strange, enjoyable and emotional sight for a person who had studied English, spent his life in colleges and looked at only one side of the picture.

The Scene In The Khānqāh

No matter who you look at, he appears to be a trustworthy person dressed in Islamic clothing. One is reciting the Qur'ān, another is performing salāh, another is occupied in dhikr, one is engrossed in meditation, another is conducting a lesson, one is writing a book while another is engrossed in studying books. As for the latter part of the night, it was a exceptional scene. One is gasping in the course of dhikr, another is crying, another is trembling, another is shaking his hands and feet in his earnestness, another is screaming out, one is reciting poetry with full emotion, another is crying and beseeching Allāh *taʿālā*. The beauty of it all is that in the darkness no one knows what the other is doing and what he is experiencing.

In short, each person was completely safe from ostentation and was opening his heart out to Allāh *taʿālā*. I too was seated in one corner and enjoying the collective spirit of this assembly of dhikr. I was hoping that Hadrat Wālā's attention will fall on a spiritless person like me and create emotions in me which are similar to those which are experienced by the others who were present there. I seemed to be saying:

> If only the one who brought the entire world to life
> with his single gaze were to glance at me as well.

The Effect Of The Khānqāh

In short, on reaching the Khānqāh, it seemed to me that I had entered another world which ought to be referred to as a

spiritual world. The beautiful cries of the dhikr of Allāh *taʿālā* were turning this heedless heart to one which remembers Allāh *taʿālā*.

> Whenever the heart hears the sound of "Allāh Allāh",
> it says "Allāh Allāh" from within the chest.

I recall the statement of an Ahl al-Hadīth friend who was also a spiritual man. He had accompanied me to the Khānqāh on one occasion. He said: "It is so lovely here. Whether you are sitting, standing, walking, sleeping, waking up – you hear the sounds of dhikr and recitation of the Qur'ān all the time and in all conditions. I go and lie down wherever I like, I listen to all the sounds, I thoroughly enjoy listening to them, and I also fall asleep in that condition. When I wake up, the same melodious sounds fill my ears. It is really lovely here."

The Assembly In The Khānqāh

Many people accompanied Hadrat Wālā to Thānah Bhawan after the gathering in Deoband. On seeing the large number of people in his assembly, Hadrat Wālā commented: "We seem to have a small gathering here as well." Because of the large number of guests and the shortage of space, I was made to share a room which was behind Hadrat Wālā's sitting place.

I was in the room reading *Munājāt Maqbūl* when Hadrat Wālā entered [the assembly area] and sat down. As was the norm, all the guests were informed of his arrival and told that they could go and sit near him if they wished. Everyone presented themselves, and both the porches were filled.

Hadrat Wālā's sitting place in those days was right next to the room in which I was housed. Since he had already arrived and taken his seat, I could not leave my room to attend the assembly. I remained in my room and continued reading *Munājāt Maqbūl*. Hadrat Wālā was inspiring all who were present with his words and statements with full fervour and passion. He seemed to be completely engrossed in the task at hand and seemed to be unmindful of everything else.

However, I was able to gauge some of the fire of genuine love which was filled in his heart and the permanent attachment which his pure heart had to the True Beloved when I experienced a sudden condition while sitting there. This is my personal feeling and is not a proof for others.

Details with regard to this condition are as follows: While he was speaking enthusiastically to all who were present, he was taking in breaths like a person normally takes when he is overwhelmed by a strange condition. While I was busy reading *Munājāt Maqbūl* in my room, my attention turned towards him and I immediately felt that each time Hadrat Wālā was breathing out, a type of fire was instantly filling in my chest and I was getting a burning sensation in my heart.

I am a sceptic by nature so I considered this feeling to be imaginary. But when I found myself experiencing it each time he breathed out, I was convinced that when Hadrat Wālā's internal fire of love [for Allāh] lights up more than normal, its physical heat is dispersed through his breathing. Now and again he breathed out in this manner a few times consecutively. When this happened, I would experience a lot of heat in my heart and felt as if the name of Allāh *taʿālā* was coming out with full force and vigour.

When I perceived this condition, I realized that this is a special time in which Allāh *taʿālā* was showering His special blessing on my heart via Hadrat Wālā. I therefore turned my attention totally to this condition and stopped reading *Munājāt Maqbūl*. The effect of this condition increased, I placed my elbows on the ground and a moaning sound emanated from me. But I restrained myself because Hadrat Wālā was sitting right outside the door. Despite this, some sounds did reach him. Much later he used to comment jokingly: "I was surprised at hearing those sounds and was wondering if some jinn had entered the room."

I would have lost control over myself at that time but fortunately for me, Hadrat Wālā asked the man who was fanning him to sit at my door because there was no other place for him to sit. I was able to control myself due to his presence. I did my utmost to control myself in order to conceal my condition. But my heart continually experienced that same condition. The assembly eventually ended after a long time and I left my room. Hadrat Wālā remarked in surprise: "Oh! You were sitting inside all this while! I was hearing some sounds but did not know that you were sitting inside. I was at a loss because I thought the room was empty and yet I was hearing sounds from inside! I thought a jinn must have come in!"

Hadrat Wālā's Spiritual Fire

Hadrat Wālā was experiencing an intense fire from within during those days, and the effect of it was displayed externally. I clearly remember sitting near Hadrat Wālā one day and felt as if I was sitting near an oven. This, despite the fact that a cold wind was blowing at the time. Perspiration was visible on his forehead and I also indicated to him that how is it that a cold wind is blowing yet he is feeling so hot!? Hadrat Wālā was taking deep breaths periodically and uttering the word "Allāh" from the depths of his heart. This was an indication of the internal fire which was within him. While moving about, he was saying "O my Master" in a strange tone of servitude. These two practices continue to this day.

Hadrat Wālā's Every Statement Is Applicable To Me

I experienced another strange condition during this first visit of mine. No matter what Hadrat Wālā was speaking about and no matter what incident he was relating – whether to do with this world or with Dīn – I found it totally applicable to my internal condition. The meanings of every part and how the applied to me would come automatically into my mind. I felt as if I was the focus of all his statements and anecdotes. It was as if Allāh *taʿālā* made Hadrat Wālā solely for my guidance.

For example, Hadrat Wālā was reciting the Qur'ān while taking his morning walk along the railway footpath. He had permitted me to accompany him. Along the way, we came across a few black buffaloes which were crossing the railway line. On seeing them he said: "Buffaloes are so ugly looking that if it was not for their milk, no one would have tolerated rearing them."

I am constantly inundated by whisperings and I thought that Hadrat Wālā was consoling me with regard to my whisperings. That even in this path [of Sufism], whisperings cross the path as these buffaloes crossed the railway line. The whisperings appear to be most abhorrent but they are tolerated because of their spiritual benefit. In short, I used to find some sort of personal relevance in every statement of Hadrat Wālā. No matter who he was addressing, I felt he was addressing me behind the veil of the person. As a saying goes:

> It is most wonderful when the secrets of the beloveds
> are related within the stories of other people.

I had become so convinced of this that I used to give the answers to some of these statements in those very references and pointers. And I was convinced that Hadrat Wālā understood my references.

Glad Tidings Of 'Ilm I'tibār

When I described my entire condition to Hadrat Wālā, he said: "I give you the glad tidings of 'ilm i'tibār." He then explained the reality of 'ilm i'tibār. He said: "When the mind goes from one thing to another because of a likeness between the two, it is known as 'ilm i'tibār. It is also known as 'ilm ta'bīr. The person who has an inclination to this branch of knowledge is able to interpret dreams because in most cases, facts take on the forms of images in dreams." He then related the story of a pious elder. He said: "The man heard a cucumber seller shouting out: 'The best ten for one dāniq.[1]' On hearing the word best, then instead of thinking of the best cucumbers, it went to the other meaning of best, viz. best people [good people]. He then thought to himself that if this is the value of the best people in the sight of Allāh – i.e. ten of them in one dāniq – how low the value will be of evil people like us! Having said this, the elder screamed and fell unconscious." Hadrat Wālā continued: "The commentaries of the Qur'ān which are written by some Sufis are filled with expressions of this nature. For example, the cow which is mentioned in Sūrah al-Baqarah is taken to mean the self. The outrage which some ignorant Sufis committed is that they began considering this type of meanings to be the actual and essential meanings. This was a serious mistake on their part."

Consolation On The Disappearance Of 'Ilm I'tibār

I was overjoyed when I received the above glad tiding from Hadrat Wālā about being given 'ilm i'tibār. But this condition disappeared after some time. When I expressed my remorse over its disappearance, Hadrat Wālā said: "Do not worry. Look, false flowers appear first on a tree. Those of them which establish themselves become true flowers from which fruits are born. There is nothing to be sorry about. Changes of this nature are inevitable in the path. 'Ilm i'tibār is nothing. Allāh

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[1] An ancient coin equal to one sixth of a dirham.

willing, you will receive much greater treasures than it. Do not worry."

Cheerfulness At The Time Of Departure

After thoroughly enjoying the few days in Hadrat Wālā's blessed company, I went to bid him farewell. I raised my hand towards the top pocket of my waistcoat in order to take out some cash money and present it as a gift to him. The pocket was quite small, so it was difficult to take out the money and it took a bit long. Hadrat Wālā said jokingly: "If the money is not coming out, just remove your waistcoat and give the waistcoat to me. I will take the money out myself." This beautiful statement removed all the awe and contraction which I experienced towards Hadrat Wālā for the first time. I think Hadrat Wālā must have perceived my condition and said these words so that I may feel at ease when leaving. Hadrat Wālā was very vigilant in observing people's emotions. I noticed that most of the time when he bids farewell to anyone, he is extremely cheerful and jovial. Unless, off course, he was sending off someone because of the person's misdemeanours. In such a case, he would make it a point of reminding the person by saying: "You have disturbed me by your misdemeanours. You must remember this so that you do not do the same thing to someone else."

In my extreme love for Hadrat Wālā, I used to remain attached to him at all times – whether appropriate or not. I used to walk with him even when he was proceeding towards his house. He brought this to my attention on one occasion by saying: "There is a lot of extremism in you." I was overawed by this warning.

On my return home, I wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā in which I described his awe-inspiring nature. I wrote this letter in a uniquely loving tone. I am quoting an extract from it:

> On this occasion, I benefited from your attribute of beauty and quality of awe – both of which are solely for the training of the seekers. Apart from this, you nurtured me with absolute and total love and affection.
>
> You possess the attribute of beauty as well, and the quality of awe too. May I be sacrificed on your simplicity. May I be given over for your smartness.

> If I offended Hadrat Wālā by my audaciousness, please pardon me for Allāh's sake. Hadrat Wālā can be rest assured that this naivety and love was out of ignorance. Hadrat Wālā's affectionate words at the time of my departure had completely removed all the heaviness which I had been experiencing as a result of Hadrat Wālā's awe-inspiring nature. I can still perceive the joy which I experienced at that time. You made me extremely cheerful at the time of my departure. I still experience a special joy when I think of it now.

A Letter Describing My Condition In The Khānqāh

I also wrote a letter in which I described the condition which I had experienced while sitting in my room in the Khānqāh – which I had described in detail above. I wrote this letter after returning home from Thānah Bhawan. I did not have the courage to describe this condition verbally while I was there. In addition to describing this condition, I said to Hadrat Wālā: "It is so sorrowful that I do not even have the capability of expressing my spiritual ailments. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to enlighten Hadrat Wālā directly about my ailments so that Hadrat Wālā could rectify and treat them." Hadrat Wālā's reply to this letter was filled with emotion and feeling, leaving me in a state of ecstasy.

Hadrat Wālā's Reply

I clear remember the time when I received the letter. I was sitting with my cousin and having a meal. The moment I saw the letter, the condition which had enveloped me in Thānah Bhawan returned once again. The condition regarding whose disappearance I had expressed my remorse and for which I had requested Hadrat Wālā's attention came to me once again. I had composed the following couplet in my letter to Hadrat Wālā:

> Please cast your gaze of attention on me once again.
> Fill my chest with the fire of love for Allāh *taʿālā*.

This is exactly what happened. No sooner I set eyes on Hadrat Wālā's reply, the burning sensation in my chest came back to me. Once I started reading the letter, that condition filled and enveloped me to such an extent that I stopped eating and

proceeded upstairs, while at the same time asking my cousin not to come up. Once I reached upstairs, I lied down on a bedstead and trembled continuously. I read this enjoyable letter so many times and read it to so many people that I memorized a major portion of it. I remember it to this day although more then twenty five years have passed and the original letter is lost, although portions of my letter which I had written to Hadrat Wālā is still preserved. Hadrat Wālā's letter is filled with themes of enthusiasm and yearning [for Allāh *ta'ālā*]. Anyone who heard it was reduced to trembling. Even now, when I read it to anyone, the person is completely overtaken. This is especially so when it is compared to Hadrat Wālā's current replies.

The fact of the matter is that in those days Hadrat Wālā was overcome and overwhelmed by emotions and feelings of love, while now he is characterized by wisdom and sagacity. The latter qualities are more beneficial and more perfect. When I read this reply to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion, he said: "I myself was very restless in those days. Now I have become absolutely dry and indifferent." He then explained it with the following example: In some seasons people eat less broth and more chutney. This is especially so during the summer and windy seasons. On the other hand, people eat more broth in winter and less chutney. They will eat chutney occasionally – taking a few licks only. They do this although the broth is dry compared to it. However, the broth makes up more of the body while the chutney is just one or two licks."

Hadrat Wālā explained the same theme in a different way on another occasion. I was with him when he was reciting the Qur'ān during his morning walk. We came across two orchards on the way. One was fully matured while the other was still flowering. The one that was matured appeared dry, while the other was green, lush and appealing. Hadrat Wālā immediately remarked: "This is the difference between the average person and the one who has reached the end. Although the green and lush orchard appears attractive, it is of no use apart from cutting it and feeding it to the oxen and becoming fodder for the animals. Although the other one appears totally dry, pale and tasteless, it has seeded, matured, become dry and is ready for harvesting. You can harvest it at will and obtain the grain from it – grain which is a source of life for man and the actual purpose of the farm."

Anyway, those early days were Hadrat Wālā's days of enthusiasm and fervour. This is why his replies of those days were very colourful and fervent. His reply to my letter follows:

"I received your letter and read every word. I enjoyed it thoroughly. If I enjoyed it so much, the writer must have enjoyed it even more when he was writing it.

O you cup-bearer! What must have been your condition when you yourself were the one who filled this cup!

All these changes are the results of love for which I congratulate you. Allāh willing,

> May these conditions remain eternal so that the affections of the man of Allāh may remain with you.

Do not pay attention to futile worries.

> I will bear your worries, there is no need for you to worry. I am more affectionate to you than a hundred fathers.

Sometimes, when a seeker sets his focus, his heart attaches itself to the shaykh, and the conditions of the shaykh's heart are transferred to his heart. The story which you related is of the same kind."

My Thoughts About My Condition And Hadrat Wālā's Reply

Hadrat Wālā's above explanation affirms what I had thought, i.e. the effects which I was experiencing were reflections of his spiritual conditions. The couplet which Hadrat Wālā quoted in his letter left me in a state of ecstasy for several days. It prompted me to compose a few lines myself. I remember the following two couplets to this day:

> O Allāh! What intense fire must be burning in that heart whose sighs ignited thousands of other hearts.
>
> A person will receive whatever comfort he desires in Paradise. All that we desire is intensely mad love [for Allāh *taʿālā*].

The pining and burning love of those days was so beloved that when I experienced tranquillity on some occasions, I would think to myself that it must not happen that I reach the Beloved too quickly or else the joy of this pining love will come to an end. I did not know at the time:

> O brother! This is an extremely high court. No matter which level you reach, you cannot reach the top.
>
> The path of love never ends by running because the more of the path you cross, the more it expands. Like a branch – it grows more when it is pruned.

I was in the habit of relating all my thoughts and whisperings to Hadrat Wālā with a view to rectification. This was also Hadrat Wālā's habit with his shaykh, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, as related to us by Hadrat Wālā himself. Thus, I also related my present thoughts to him. Hadrat Wālā laughed and said: "You have a unique temperament. This thought stemmed from the joy of yearning and not – Allāh forbid – from turning away. As stated by a person who was in a state of ecstasy:

> I will not sell the joy of your pain in return for a cure."

Moreover, since it was merely a whispering, Hadrat Wālā did not express any disapproval but astonishment.

Yearning To Go To Thānah Bhawan

After my first visit to Thānah Bhawan my desire to go back intensified. In the first letter which I wrote to Hadrat Wālā after returning home – the latter part of which I still have in my possession – I also wrote: "My heart is yearning to visit Hadrat Wālā and Thānah Bhawan. I cannot seem to be satisfied. May Allāh *taʿālā* materialize my wish very quickly. Āmīn." Whenever I got a holiday, even if it was for just two days, I would go with genuine enthusiasm. In fact, most of the time, I used to go when I used to get off in the last Saturday and Sunday of the month. I would travel from a distant place like Fatahpūr and present myself before Hadrat Wālā but would hardly get twelve hours to spend in his blessed company. I would also spend a lot of money for the journey.

Many Blessings Despite A Short Stay

On one of those short visits, Hadrat Wālā attended a graduation ceremony in Sahāranpūr while he was a bit ill. I spent just five hours with him because I had leave for just one day, i.e. Sunday. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I benefited

tremendously from this short visit. I clearly remember experiencing a feeling of presence with Allāh *taʿālā* for the first time during this visit. This was a result of Hadrat Wālā's special focus and attention because he was extremely impressed by my long journey for such a short stay. I used to experience such effects of Hadrat Wālā's focus and attention during every visit of mine that I used to say that even if I had to spend fifty rupees for the journey and I am able to merely set my gaze on him and he looks at me, then I will not bother in the least about the fifty rupees for that one look. In fact, I would consider it to be a boon. As a poet says:

> O you for whose single glance many glances can be sacrificed. O you for whose single gaze loads of this world can be sacrificed.
>
> I just gave a few stones and purchased a life. All thanks are due to Allāh, this was a real bargain.

Forcing Myself To Visit Hadrat Wālā

I constantly heard Hadrat Wālā speaking about the benefits of the companionship of a shaykh. So even when I did not feel like, I would, as per the teaching of Hadrat Wālā, impose upon my self to go and visit him. I would purchase a ticket and force myself onto a train. I would then say to my self: When you rationally see the benefit of it, there is no need to procrastinate and hesitate. It is in my power to buy the ticket and it is in my power to sit on the train. Now whether my self likes it or not, I am going.

I used to take lengthy unpaid leaves or half-paid leaves in order to present myself at the Khānqāh. If I ever experienced a lack of interest in going either because of a natural hesitation or worldly occupations, I used to read the following couplet of Mīr Mīnā'ī Marhūm:

> O Amīr! The fear of the heart produces thousands of excuses for not going. It says: I will neither go towards the desert nor to the garden.

Travelling With Hadrat Wālā

I also accompanied Hadrat Wālā on lengthy journeys. In addition to the desire in my heart to accompany him, I had heard him saying that if a seeker gets an opportunity, he must

accompany his shaykh on a journey because he is able to get closer to the shaykh and faces various types of situations. This opens the hearts, joins them and creates mutual affinity. And benefiting from one's shaykh is dependent on affinity. Another benefit is that a journey helps one on the path to rectification because the shaykh is able to observe different types of situations and interactions of the seeker for which he can correct and reprimand him. Such opportunities are almost impossible when at home. In the same way, the seeker can learn certain lessons from the shaykh's interactions which he would not have learnt had he not been on a journey with him.

A Few Admonitory Lessons

In addition to journeying with Hadrat Wālā being very enjoyable, it was also very beneficial. First of all, his every situation was admonitory, and he himself would scold and reprimand whenever the situation demanded. A few details in this regard were given in the chapter on his travels and journeys. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, during this 28-year relationship with Hadrat Wālā, I had the opportunity of observing thousands of admonitory and pleasant incidents and interactions, and listening to countless statements, instructions and words of advice. It is beyond me to encompass them all. As for the effects and impressions which they had on my heart, those can never be described. I wrote a couplet in this regard:

> The tongue has no heart and the heart has no tongue. O what can I do? How can I explain what goes through my heart?

Anyway, a few incidents were related above. I will now relate a few miscellaneous incidents, statements and writings which come to my mind and without any consideration as to whether I quoted them in any of my other writings or not.

First Story: A Maulānā's Error Is Rectified

A Maulānā who was staying in the Khānqāh posted a letter to one of his friends in which he described his own spiritual conditions. He added in his letter: "I am acquiring such and such blessings here. You should also come here and acquire them." Hadrat Wālā came to know about it. He was most concerned about removing the evils of the self from the seekers

and considered it essential to give more importance to rectification of the self than to different forms of dhikr. This is why he turned his attention to his rectification. Incidentally, the Maulānā passed by Hadrat Wālā after the zuhr salāh. So Hadrat Wālā cautioned him silently by saying: "Did you not feel ashamed of exposing your spiritual conditions which are really secrets? Exposing them to others is also a type of claim." This caution of Hadrat Wālā was on the surface. Then after the ʿasr salāh, the Maulānā tried to give Hadrat Wālā a note with a view to describing his condition. Hadrat Wālā brushed him aside with an angry tone, refused to take the note from him and said: "Janāb, Māshā Allāh, you have become perfect. I am not qualified to rectify those who are perfect. You may now go somewhere else because I cannot undertake your rectification." Hadrat Wālā then instructed for the Maulānā's possessions to be removed from the Khānqāh, had them placed outside, and issued an order for him to leave. The Maulānā began weeping bitterly but Hadrat Wālā, despite being very soft-hearted, never – as per his own words – allowed his emotions to overpower his mind. So despite the Maulānā's crying, begging and beseeching, the order of his expulsion – which was based on nothing but wisdom – was not changed.

This incident occurred immediately after the ʿasr salāh so all the worshippers were still sitting in their rows in the musjid. I was also present. Hadrat Wālā remained seated, and delivered a fervent lecture on the subject of servitude and self-obliteration being the essential objectives. All the worshippers were in a trance-like silence. I became so conscious of my uselessness and worthlessness that I moved a bit back from the row out of shame. On looking at my own filthy condition, I did not consider myself worthy of sitting in the row of righteous and pious people.

In the course of his lecture, Hadrat Wālā said that people consider divine exposition to be something very great whereas it is nothing because it has no influence on one's proximity with Allāh *taʿālā*. Some people have a natural affinity with divine exposition while others do not, just as how some people are born short-sighted while others are far-sighted. He then pointed towards the ablution area of the musjid and said: "Imagine a person who can only see as far as the ablution area, while another can see beyond, as far as the street outside. Is the one who can see as far as the street closer to Allāh *taʿālā*?

This is merely a type of sight and has nothing to do with proximity. In the same way, dispositions are different. Some people have no affinity whatsoever with divine exposition. They can engage in thousands of spiritual exercises but never experience any divine exposition. What does divine exposition have to do with piety? The essential thing is servitude. By Allāh, if a person experiences a million divine expositions and then evaluates his emotions, he will realize that his proximity has not progressed in the least. On the other hand, if he were to say *Sub-ḫānallāh* a few times and checks his emotions, he will clearly perceive some sort of progress in his proximity with Allāh *taʿālā*. Try this out anytime you like and you will experience it for yourself."

Ḫaḏrat Wālā continued speaking on the subject of servitude for quite some time.

A special effect which his talk had on me was that many of the whisperings which had caused me considerable stress and worry were removed completely to the extent that they would not come to me even if I thought about them. I was totally overjoyed over my recovery from this illness – like a person who is given life after having lost hope in it or given the treasure of īmān all over again. I would have been prepared to give away an entire kingdom just to acquire this treasure.

I referred to whisperings as an illness metaphorically because Ḫaḏrat Wālā does not even consider an inundation of whisperings to be an illness. This is because a spiritual illness is only considered to be one when it causes Dīnī harm. And whisperings have absolutely no Dīnī harm as per the explicit text:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

Allāh does not impose on a self anything which it cannot bear.

In fact, if anyone complains to Ḫaḏrat Wālā about an inundation of whisperings or mere inclination towards sin without acting and resolving to do it, then the first question he asks him is: "What is the Dīnī harm in it?"

Anyway, I was overjoyed over the removal of my lengthy complaint about whisperings. When Ḫaḏrat Wālā completed his talk and was leaving, I expressed the effect it had on me. He replied in a happy tone: "Yes, it was indeed a beneficial

lecture." Hadrat Wālā left, but the effect which his lecture had on my condition remained. After the maghrib salāh, I was sitting alone on Hadrat Wālā's porch and was in a sort of ecstasy over the condition which I was experiencing. I was repeating the following couplet from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's *Munājāt*:

> O Allāh! Make me unmindful of everything else. O Allāh! Make me mindful of none except You.

Subsequently I was so overpowered by Allāh's presence that the joy of it left me self-obliterated and even caused me to lose control over my hands and feet. When this condition increased considerably, I spontaneously thought of going and presenting myself before Hadrat Wālā. I got up immediately and proceeded towards his house. Since I had lost control over my hands and feet, I had to proceed breathlessly, taking support from the walls, and eventually reached his house. Hadrat Wālā's attendant, Bhāi Nayāz Khān, saw my condition and became worried. He asked me if I was okay. I replied with a sigh: "Bhāi, go and call Hadrat Wālā."

Hadrat Wālā was inside. The attendant informed him immediately. Incidentally, Hadrat Wālā had just finished relieving himself. He became worried when he heard about my condition, came out immediately and asked: "Are you okay? How are you?" I fell at his feet the moment I saw him and said: "Hadrat conferred me with a great treasure today." I shed tears of happiness and repeatedly said to him – as though I was a madman – "Hadrat, you did a great favour to me today. You gave me freedom from a serious ailment. You conferred a great treasure to me." I was neither fully conscious at the time nor fully unconscious; it was an in-between feeling.

Hadrat Wālā's one hand was empty. He lifted me up and, with the help of Bhāi Nayāz Khān, took me inside and made me lie on a nearby bedstead. He placed his blessed hand on my chest and repeatedly said: "Take control of yourself." Since I was still not fully conscious, I remained on the bedstead and began wiping my tears of joy with Hadrat Wālā's hands. I said without reservation: "I am sure Hadrat Wālā too must be very pleased with my condition." He replied happily: "Indeed. Why not? I am happy with the good conditions of all my associates." He added: "The Sufis refer to this condition as expansion and affability. It is the opposite of retraction and fear. All praise is due to Allāh

taʿālā, such conditions which take several years to achieve in other places are achieved within a few weeks with Hadrat Hājī Sāhib by Allāh's grace."

This demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's extreme respect, confidence, indebtedness and fulfilment of the right of love in the sense that he attributes all his excellences and achievements to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He says with full confidence: "I know my own condition very well. After all, even before I presented myself before Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, I was occupied in acquiring knowledge and teaching. But those points only started to come to my mind after remaining with him. I had never thought of them or dreamt of them before that. So if these are not the blessings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, who else's can they be?"

I recall another very beneficial statement of Hadrat Wālā in this regard. He said: "Even after reaching perfection, the prerequisite for the continuation of blessings is to maintain one's contact of faith and indebtedness to one's shaykh for the rest of one's life. Yes, after reaching perfection, the need for further education [in this field] does not remain."

I now return to my story. When I recovered slightly from my condition through Hadrat Wālā's focus and I felt some peace, I got up and sat up respectfully. Hadrat Wālā then proceeded inside.

I was Hadrat Wālā's guest and so was another person. A rice dish was sent for us from inside. Although I had recovered from my condition, I was not fully stable as yet. I clearly remember not making small bite-size portions when eating the rice. Instead, I was taking hands-full of it, playing with it, and laughing loudly like a madman. The other guest was not aware of my actual internal condition so he began objecting to my behaviour. Bhāi Nayāz informed him that I should be excused for now because I was not my normal self. The following couplets come to mind:

> If we are devoid of all possessions and mad, it is because of the measure of the intoxication of the cup-bearer.
>
> Do not rebuke the astonished and confused fakir because he has some other motive for which he is striking his hands and legs.

The above was a description of my own condition. Now listen to the story of the Maulānā on account of whom I had the opportunity of listening to Hadrat Wālā's fervent and impressive lecture, and reduced me to lose control of my self.

Hadrat Wālā expelled him from the Khānqāh so that it may serve as a warning to him. He proceeded to a musjid and remained there. He bore severe worry and stress for a few days, repented to Allāh *ta'ālā*, sought His forgiveness, cried before Him, and then sent a note to Hadrat Wālā via another person asking him to pardon him. Since he was disciplined sufficiently and his pride and arrogance had vanished completely – as perceived by Hadrat Wālā – Hadrat Wālā pardoned him and wrote to him: "I do not find any displeasure towards you in my heart. This is a sentimental sign of the acceptance of your repentance. You are permitted to return to the Khānqāh."

He returned to the Khānqāh and occupied himself in dhikr and other spiritual practices. This Maulānā had pledged bay'ah to Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and when the latter passed away, requested Hadrat Wālā to accept him for rectification. He personally related to me: "I acquired many benefits in those few days." By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, he departed having received khilāfah from Hadrat Wālā, proceeded to Bengal where a large number of people benefited from him. He passed away quite some time ago. May Allāh *ta'ālā* pardon him and confer him with the highest ranks in Paradise. Āmīn.

I observed this on countless occasions, and also made reference to it previously, that Hadrat Wālā's disciplining had the quality of cleaning and purging, resulting in complete and total cleansing. His disciplining is a manifestation of the verse

عَسٰى اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْئًا وَّهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

Perhaps you dislike a thing while it is best for you.[1]

A seeker only realizes this later on when he witnesses the benefits of it.

Note: This entire story demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's level of instruction and power of benefiting.

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 216.

Second Story: A Couplet Has An Effect On Me

Hadrat Wālā was waiting at the Thānah Bhawan railway station for a train. I was with him because I intended travelling with. As was his habit, he reached the station before the expected arrival of the train. He had to wait for quite some time. As usual, many people came to bid him farewell. So he was occupying them with his words of wisdom.

He spoke about a Qārī who was a teacher in Hadrat Wālā's Madrasah. Hadrat Wālā said: "He was in the habit of walking around in the Madrasah with a stick on his shoulder while wearing a pants which reached midway to his calves. When I saw him in that condition one day, I said to him: Qārī Sāhib! You should also sing this couplet while you are walking around in this way:

> Nowadays, those who are madly in love with you are
> in a fervent state of madness.

I do not know with what emotion Hadrat Wālā related this story because it created a type of madness within me. I needed water at the time. I took a water can and proceeded to obtain some water. As I was walking, I was singing the above couplet and thoroughly enjoying myself. I continued singing it even on my return.

I was completely overcome, I lost control over my limbs and was on the verge of falling when my eyes fell on Hadrat Wālā,. I became very worried because if I were to fall in front of all these people I would become a laughing stock. I did my utmost to control myself until the train arrived and sat down in a coach together with Hadrat Wālā and his companions. Janāb Hāfiz ʿAbd al-Latīf Sāhib, the principal of Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr, and Janāb Hāfiz ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib Thānwī also accompanied us. I was seated next to the Principal Sāhib. I was still overcome by my spiritual condition while sitting in the train. I remember that while I was sitting, I was loosing control over myself and falling repeatedly on the Principal Sāhib. I feared what people will say if this condition worsened. When it did not stop, I took out a used envelope from my pocket, tore one side of it, wrote the following couplet on the reverse blank side, and gave it to Hadrat Wālā.

> O people of the heart! My heart is slipping from my hands. For Allāh's sake, do not let this pain which is still a secret to become exposed.

Since this couplet clearly portrayed my condition at the time, Hadrat Wālā was very impressed by it and said: "I will make it into an amulet for myself." Instead of being comforted by these beautiful words from him, my condition intensified.

After a short while, Hadrat Wālā said to Hāfiz ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib: "Hāfizjī, give me a pencil so that I could write a response to Khwājah Sāhib's note." He took a pencil from Hāfizjī and wrote the following couplet under my couplet:

> Although we may be defamed before the intelligent ones, we do not desire popularity and fame.

He then returned my note to me. I was astonished because I had feared defamation and being mocked at, and Hadrat Wālā wrote about the same thing in his couplet. It seemed as though my entire condition was exposed to him. Through Hadrat Wālā's focus and his looking at me repeatedly, the effects of that condition subsided – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: This story also portrays Hadrat Wālā's power of influence and his overwhelming enthusiasm and yearning of those days.

Third Story: Consolation From Hadrat Wālā's Statements

1. Hadrat Wālā provides solace and consolation to a seeker in a most appealing and satisfying manner causing the seeker to regain his confidence at the exact time of despair. Hadrat Wālā's consolation is not confined to words. Rather, when he provides solace to a person or gives him glad tidings either verbally or in writing, he perceives it within himself the moment the addressee hears or sees it. The immense consolation which seekers experience with Hadrat Wālā is acknowledged by all – his friends, enemies, associate and non-associates. Just recently, a shaykh belonging to our spiritual lineage conveyed his problems to another shaykh also belonging to our spiritual lineage. Although the latter shaykh had severe differences with Hadrat Wālā on certain issues, he said to the one who sought his help: "The solution to your problems can only be found in Thānah Bhawan."

As the saying goes:

الفضل ما شهدت به الأعداء

Virtue is what enemies testify to.

2. Not long ago, a murīd of another shaykh wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā in which he said: "I need your permission to describe my conditions to Hadrat Wālā because I experienced a lot of solace from reading your lectures. This is especially so with regard to whisperings – I can repulse them only when I think of Hadrat Wālā." He added: "Although I have confidence in my own shaykh, my confidence in Hadrat Wālā is more." He also wrote: "The cause of my distress is that I hastened in pledging bayʿah."

Hadrat Wālā said: "Look, these are the consequences of hastiness in pledging bayʿah. I prohibit hastiness in pledging bayʿah and constantly defer it for the same reason."

3. Hadrat Wālā often receives letters of this nature from the murīds of other shaykhs. Hadrat Wālā used to permit them to write on condition they do not harbour any evil thoughts about their shaykhs and they write to him solely for the sake of learning.

4. A student of Western knowledge suddenly experienced a yearning for Allāh *taʿālā*. He gave up his studies and went out in search of a shaykh. Incidentally, there was a bidʿatī shaykh who lived nearby and was quite well-known. The student went and asked him for his advice. Look at the greatness of Allāh *taʿālā*! Although this shaykh belonged to a different creed, he advised the student to go to Hadrat Wālā. However, Hadrat Wālā advised him to go to Deoband to further his studies and to pledge bayʿah to Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* because it would be easier for him there. The student followed Hadrat Wālā's advice.

Note: Names have been intentionally left out in the above stories so that no one is offended. This is the case with most stories in this biography.

My own stories in this regard

I now present some of my own stories on this subject of consolation. They have all been included under the heading, "Third Story" because they contain the same theme.

An example of changing conditions: I said to H̲ad̲rat Wālā with extreme remorse: "H̲ad̲rat, whatever internal purification I acquire from your blessed company is gradually washed away when I become engrossed in the evil affairs of this world." He replied in a very comforting and consoling tone: "It is not so serious. When you dirty your clothes, the washer-man washes them for you. You dirty them again and he washes them again."

Chronic fever and internal affinity: I said to him on one occasion: "H̲ad̲rat, you get an ordinary illness like a cough, cold and winter flu. Another is a chronic fever. I am suffering from a chronic fever, so I am in real need." He replied: "Congratulations. This is a sign of internal affinity [with Allāh *taʿālā*] because, like a chronic fever, internal affinity spreads throughout the body through all the veins and is never removed." What he meant was: How do you know that what you consider to be an illness is really an illness? You see a few combined effects of an illness while the condition is really good.

A real heart: "I said: H̲ad̲rat, my heart has a strange unsteadiness." He replied: "You have a real heart because the meaning of a heart (*qalb*) is that it does not remain constant in one condition. It is always turning around."

Confusion and disentanglement: I wrote to H̲ad̲rat Wālā about one of my spiritual worries. I referred to it as follows: "I am in severe confusion." He replied: "Confusion is a prelude to disentanglement." The Qur'ān says:

اِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely with difficulty there is ease.[1]

5. I had written a letter to H̲ad̲rat Wālā in which I described my external and internal worries. He replied: "Allāh willing, you will acquire success in both worlds. My heart testifies to this."

6. I wrote a letter to him in which I described my many conditions. I also wrote: "I am so desirous of speaking about H̲ad̲rat Wālā that sometimes I mention my private conditions to others, whereas, it is forbidden for a novice to reveal his secrets

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[1] Sūrah al-Inshirāh̲, 94: 6.

because of the harms which this entails.” He replied: “All your conditions are praiseworthy. The only thing which remains is that unsteadiness has to be changed to steadiness. Allāh willing, this will also be realized. There is so much of motion in a boiling cauldron. This is a sign that it is moving forward [the food is getting ready]. Then see how everything subsides and becomes calm. This is the steadiness which I am referring to.”

There is no harm in merely singing in solitude as described by yourself.

Exposing your condition to any unknowing person is not blameworthy because it is not intentional.

7. I wrote a letter in which I complained about my failure to take control of my time. Hadrat Wālā replied: “I give you the glad tidings of success despite your present condition. Allāh willing, you will never be deprived. This is the proof for what I am saying:

> Keep yourself occupied in correcting yourself while you are on this path. Do not remain free for a single moment until the very end.
>
> Striving has to continue until your last breath so that the favours of a spiritual master may continue falling on you.
>
> Do not go down the alley of despair because there are still very big hopes. Do not go towards darkness because there are many suns.

Wastage and submission: In one of my letters to Hadrat Wālā, I complained that I had made a firm resolution to take full control over how I spent my time but I could not keep it up. He replied: “In this wastage of time the issue of following one’s destiny is at least solved. It shows that man is helpless before divine decree. You had resolved to control your time but you ended up wasting it. Allāh willing, the exposition of this issue will also be a step to progress.”

Note: The full reply to this letter was quoted in the section where I had related incidents regarding my bayʿah.

The door to the reality: I wrote in one of my letters: “By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, during my last visit I experienced a peculiar condition which I had never experienced before.

Unfortunately, after I returned home, that condition waned gradually and eventually disappeared completely." Hadrat Wālā wrote a very fine point which always proved to be a guiding lamp for me. If the seekers bear it in mind, they will never be stressed by the ups and downs of the path.

He wrote: "To experience a condition and then to realize its disappearance is also a boon. The things which remain forever are one's intellect and īmān. Everything else comes and goes."

I benefited tremendously from this reply and it seemed to me as if the door to the reality was opened to me.

Do not go towards despair: I was very stressed over an inundation of whisperings. This even caused me to doubt my own īmān. I became terrified and wrote a letter in which I described all my whisperings and fears. I added: "In such a situation, I now leave it to Hadrat Wālā to tell me whether I have īmān or – Allāh forbid – I am deprived of it. However, bear in mind that the answer will be from a Mujaddid and a lighthouse of instruction. If I lose hope in him, I am destroyed. I took a lot of courage and asked this question after placing my trust in Allāh *taʿālā*. I hope for the best from Him."

Hadrat Wālā gave me the glad tidings of īmān and wrote this couplet:

> Do not go down the alley of despair because there are still very big hopes. Do not go towards darkness because there are many suns.

I also added the following in my letter: "If Hadrat Wālā were to abandon me after learning of my terrible condition and shifted his gaze of attention from me, there can be nothing but the Hell-fire for me." Hadrat Wālā wrote: "Allāh forbid, why should I turn my attention away?" He then quoted the following couplet:

> I am the slave of the owner of the tavern. His kindness is directed towards me all the time. A pious and righteous person shows his kindness sometimes, and does not at other times.

The capital of consolation: On one occasion, I felt very sad when I was departing from his company. So he said to me in a most affectionate tone: "There is no need to feel sad because, Allāh willing, the capital of consolation is with you all the time. That is, your bond with Allāh *taʿālā*."

I have come to obliterate myself: I took a long leave from my job and presented myself at the Khānqāh for the sake of rectification. The moment I arrived, I wrote a couplet which I had composed and presented it to Hadrat Wālā:

> I have come to your threshold with no other desire apart from asking you to obliterate me. I have come here to obliterate myself.

He replied immediately with a tone of full confidence: "Allāh willing, that is exactly what will happen."

A solution to all problems: I noted many of my spiritual maladies, expressed my despair at being able to realize my rectification, and presented the letter to Hadrat Wālā.

I added: "How can I be rid off so many illnesses?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is not difficult at all. Just adhere to two things, awareness and courage.

Glory to Allāh! Glory to Allāh! What a concise and effective formula which encompasses all definitions. This is a general point which embraces all the finer details of rectification. I was overcome by a unique condition when I read this reply. I experienced such a deluge of themes and ideas from these two points that if I had sat down at that time to write on them, I would have compiled a book. I even intended to write on them but my laziness did not permit me to proceed. I then forgot all those themes and ideas. However, in order to remember this formula easily, I preserved it in a couplet which I remember to this day:

> The formula of awareness and courage which Hadrat taught me is an elixir for the rectification of the Muslim nation.

Indeed, if a person is aware of his faults and takes courage when the time demands it, he will never commit a sin. Hadrat Wālā said with regard to courage: "If courage is not followed by success, it is not even considered to be courage. It is merely an intention of courage."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a valuable explanation of courage. It ought to be borne in mind at all times.

Past and future mistakes are pardoned: I am quite disorganized and unsystematic while Hadrat Wālā is extremely

organized and systematic. I caused a lot of inconvenience to him in the past and I still do. I asked him to excuse me and pardon me on one occasion. He replied spontaneously with genuine affection: "All past and future mistakes are pardoned. There is no need to worry." He then read this verse:

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللّٰهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ

So that Allāh may forgive you your past and future sins.[1]

I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to bless me with sound understanding and inspire me with correct etiquette so that I never inconvenience Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

A Few Incidents Of Seekers With Regard To Consolation

Mercy and joy

A person wrote: "By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am carrying out my spiritual practices but I am not experiencing any joy in my heart." Hadrat Wālā replied: "All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* you are at least experiencing mercy, even though you are not experiencing joy. Joy (*farhat*) is merely His slave-girl. Allāh willing, she too will present herself when the time comes."

By the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, the person's mood opened up completely through this fine and heartening reply. He wrote back to Hadrat Wālā saying: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's prayers, that slave-girl too presented herself."

The man's father was a chief officer of Kadūrah. He was a poet and a man of letters. He greatly admired Hadrat Wālā's reply and was astonished at how Hadrat Wālā knew these expressions of the Nawābs and Begums. The word *farhat* is generally the name of slave-girls who are allotted specific turns. I used to read Hadrat Wālā's published lectures to the father. He said to me: "The Maulānā [Hadrat Wālā] writes poetry in the form of prose."

Permissible thoughts

I was speaking to Hadrat Wālā about his excellent manner of instruction and consolation and I related to him my mother's story. My mother complained about various useless thoughts

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[1] Sūrah al-Fath, 48: 2.

inundating her while she is engaged in dhikr. So much so, she starts thinking about incidents which took place in her childhood. When I had conveyed my mother's complaint to Hadrat Wālā, he said: "She must not worry about such thoughts. In fact, she should consider lawful thoughts to be a boon [at least she is not having evil thoughts] because they come as barriers to evil thoughts. If the heart is emptied completely of lawful thoughts, evil thought begin to enter it. Once Allāh *taʿālā* blesses you with overwhelming dhikr, these lawful thoughts will also leave you.

The benefit of consolation

After I related the above incident to Hadrat Wālā, he said: "What I say about permissible thoughts or whisperings is based on my own past experiences. I do not say it as a proof but rather explain my own observations because I myself went through all these conditions. Had I said these things solely on academic grounds, the person/s would never have been consoled. I bore many troubles at that time but I now express my gratitude to Allāh *taʿālā* for having enabled me to cross all obstacles."

Hadrat Wālā continues: "A person went to one of my enemies for advice on spiritual matters. My enemy mentioned me by name and said to the person: 'If you want real consolation, then go to him. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred him with special expertise in giving solace and consolation. But if you want to merely establish facts, you may go anywhere you like.'"

Hadrat Wālā added: "All this is from the colour of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. I have not come across greater consolation than from him. The extent to which Sufism can be traversed through him cannot be achieved from anyone else. The reason for this is that a bond of love for Allāh *taʿālā* is created through him; and love is the shortest path to Him. This is why I pay particular attention to creating love for Allāh *taʿālā* in the hearts of the seekers."

Satan cannot harm the friends of Allāh

A person was severely distressed by whisperings. After writing at length on matters which would give solace to him, Hadrat Wālā concluded by saying: "Brother! If a person has Allāh over his head, he can have no worry whatsoever. What harm can Satan do to him!?" Allāh *taʿālā* Himself says:

اِنَّهٗ لَيْسَ لَهٗ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُوْنَ

He has no authority over those who are believers and they place their trust in their Sustainer.[1]

There was a sincere and religious person who had pledged allegiance to Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He wrote a long letter to Hadrat Wālā in which he mentioned having whisperings of evil thoughts against some of the 'ulamā' and committee members of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband because of some rivalry and friction which was taking place there at the time. The person wrote: "I have full confidence and faith in them especially because they are of the Deobandī creed and part of the Imdādīyyah spiritual family. This is why I cannot have any evil thoughts about any of them. Although I have no qualification whatsoever to interfere with regard to the opinions of these elders of Dīn, I find it difficult to move away from the defective thoughts which I am having. I am very troubled and confused over this issue. Please provide solace to me."

Hadrat Wālā wrote a short but very concise and convincing reply to him. He wrote:

> You strove a lot to set right your Dīnī matters. Allāh willing, you will be rewarded for it. The needs of each patient are different. The prescription which will be most beneficial to you is this:
>
> Do your own work, don't be concerned about others.
>
> Remain silent with your tongue, pen and heart. Be patient over your distress. Neither have faith in anyone nor evil thoughts about anyone because both are harmful. You will not even be questioned about it on the day of Resurrection.
>
> Was salām

A fear and a drop

A person who was overcome by fear wrote: "I am in extreme fear." Hadrat Wālā replied: "Fear is a drop in the ocean of

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[1] Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 99.

cognition. May Allāh *taʿālā* increase it and turn it into an ocean."

Waves of the sea of love

A person wrote: "Sometimes I experience retraction and at other times expansion. Sometimes I am sad and sometimes happy."

The letter was quite long but Hadrat Wālā wrote a short reply in one corner. I can say without exaggeration that he encapsulated an ocean in one drop. He wrote: "Your entire condition deserves gratitude. Every part of it are waves of the sea of love. The motion of the sea is splendid and its calmness too is a source of rest. Congratulations to you. Continue with your work without any worry. I too am praying for you."

A treatment for blasphemous whisperings

A chief who owned many properties was experiencing blasphemous whisperings. He noted his entire condition in detail and presented it to Hadrat Wālā. He concluded his letter by writing: "If Hadrat can convince me that the existence of Allāh *taʿālā* is proven through rational and traditional proofs, I will be satisfied without even knowing what those proofs are. I am saying this because I have full faith and confidence in Hadrat's intellect."

Hadrat Wālā replied with absolute confidence and firmness: "I take an oath in Allāh's name that the existence of Allāh *taʿālā* is proven with such rational and traditional proofs that even the greatest philosophers can be silenced and have no room to refute them."

No sooner the man read this, all his worries were removed. He was so overcome by joy that he sought permission from Hadrat Wālā to unreservedly give away all his properties to Hadrat Wālā. Where would Hadrat Wālā ever agree to such an offer!?

A reply to a lawyer

This incident took place just yesterday, i.e. 25 Rajab 1354 A.H. After the Jumuʿah assembly, Hadrat Wālā read out portions of a letter written by a very senior and religious lawyer. The lawyer had spent about three weeks in Hadrat Wālā's company and had just returned home. He wrote: "The world over here

has changed." Hadrat Wālā replied: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* at least your Dīn has not changed."

The lawyer added: "When I was there [in Thānah Bhawan], I perceived light and effulgence in everything. I do not perceive that here." Hadrat Wālā replied: "Absence of light is also good."

> There is a darkness prevailing deep in the fountain of life.

Hadrat Wālā then said to us with regard to the above reply: This is not just poetry but the reality because if a person does any good deed in such a condition, he receives more reward. A Hadīth states that holding on to Dīn in the latter times will be more difficult than holding a burning ember in one's hand. If a person does one good deed during that time, he will get the reward of fifty people who did that good deed. The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* asked: "O Rasūlullāh! Fifty people from among us [group of Sahābah] or from them?" He replied: "From you."

Hadrat Wālā added: "I say: If a person does a good deed at present, he will get the reward of fifty Abū Bakr's (*radiyallāhu ʿanhu*)." He then said: "This is the fineness in that darkness."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at Hadrat Wālā's words and the lofty meanings which they contain.

The lawyer also wrote: "I am still feeling a bit alien after leaving there and returning home." Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is a mercy. Had you become used to the place, it would have been a sign of lack of perception."

In short, Hadrat Wālā wrote very comforting and consoling replies which were also in accordance with the reality of the situation.

A struggle between two wrestlers

A seeker complained about being perplexed and confused. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Brother, when two wrestlers struggle against each other, you will not find one putting all his force into fighting and the other merely standing idly with his hands at his sides, giving his opponent the opportunity to floor him. Similarly, you are struggling against your self and you will have to use all your force. Even if you cannot overpower it completely, you should at least floor it now and again, and

sometimes it will floor you. But you must never lose courage under any situation. When Allāh *taʿālā* sees you putting all your efforts – despite your weakness, He will give you victory. In short, you must neither lose courage nor lose hope."

A treatment for heedlessness

On returning to his house, one of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' wrote: "The condition which I experienced in the Khānqāh is leaving me gradually. Kindly inform me if there is any way I can ensure its continued existence." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "If that was possible, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* would not have said to Hadrat Hanzalah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

ولكن يا حنظلة ساعة وساعة

O Hanzalah! There is a time for this and a time for that.

The person also wrote: "The condition of the heart is terrible. Heedlessness has taken root. I request your prayers and also ask for a cure." Hadrat Wālā replied:

العلاج بالضد وهو محل الإختيار والجد

Treatment is by resorting to the opposite. It is within one's choice and comes with striving.

The path simplified

A person wrote: "I find my condition ruined. There is nothing but perplexity."

The reply to it is so comprehensive and effective that it ought to be made one's programme for the rest of one's life. Bearing in mind that it is extremely important, I requested Hadrat Wālā to give it a title, and he named it "The path simplified". It is quoted here from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.

The desire to put yourself into difficulty is certainly not its treatment. The path is absolutely clear – do not worry about what is not within your control. Taking courage is within your control. If you err, make up for the past through seeking forgiveness, and renew your courage for the future. In addition to courage, adhere to prayer and beseeching Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! The entire path of Sufism is encapsulated in this concise reply. Ask those who value this teaching and those who practise on it. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire me to

practise on it through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā. May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate the ranks, knowledge and cognition of Hadrat Wālā, and may He keep him safe and sound forever. Āmīn. Āmīn. Āmīn.

A person who was distressed by whisperings is consoled

A person whose shaykh was gone for hajj was inundated by whisperings. He became extremely distressed and wrote a heart-rending letter to Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā wrote such a consoling letter that all the man's whisperings disappeared the moment he read it and all his worries melted. He wrote a second letter which is quoted here from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*:

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am neither inundated by whisperings nor suspicions. They have disappeared completely. How can I thank Hadrat for having steered and guided an unworthy and sinful person like myself during such a trying time? May Allāh *taʿālā* continue pouring His bounties and favours on you until the day of Resurrection. I hope for your affectionate gaze to fall on me. Āmīn.

I [the compiler] say: This is not the experience of just one but of thousands of seekers on the path that the moment they revert to Hadrat Wālā all their worries and confusion are removed, and the destination seems to be very near. This is not only the effect of what he writes, but also his prayers, attention and the blessings of his acceptance in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā*. After all, how can words alone be so effective?

Hadrat Wālā himself says: "Although my answers are very brief, they are so much in accordance with the condition of the suffering person that if a person was present at the time when my letter reached the suffering person, he would see the effects of my answers on him. There were some who were on the verge of committing suicide. However – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – the moment my letter reached them, they were fully consoled and desisted from their intention."

Whisperings are signs of īmān

Incidentally, I just came across a seeker's letter on the same subject and Hadrat Wālā's excellent reply in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. I consider it appropriate to quote it here. There is a slight possibility that I might have quoted the following reply of Hadrat Wālā in a previous section related to his writings on the

subject of whisperings. However, it is difficult to avoid repetitions in such a voluminous book. Anyway, the repetition of so beneficial themes is not without benefit. In fact, additional benefit is envisaged. Without even intending a similarity, the repetitions in the Qur'ān are for the same purpose, viz. additional awareness. I humbly request the reader to excuse me if he occasionally comes across any repetitions in this book. After this short but necessary prelude, I present the seeker's condition and Hadrat Wālā's reply to it.

Condition: I am suffering from a difficult illness. I tried to repulse it but failed. There are times when I see no traces whatsoever of whisperings and fears in my heart. But at other times, I am so inundated by them that I do not think that even an atheist experiences them. At such a time I feel I should commit suicide so that the earth may be purified of me and a worthless person should never be allowed to inhabit this world. I make a humble appeal to Hadrat Wālā to pay special attention to my condition and to pray for me.

Reply: There is no harm in praying for you but you should remember that this condition is not blameworthy in the first place and should not be given so much importance. No one had a more perfect and superior condition than the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. The Ahādīth clearly state that they experienced such conditions. They preferred getting burnt and reduced to coal than to even utter them. Yet, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* referred to it as an indication of clear and explicit īmān. If a person does not rejoice over a matter which is an indication of īmān, then there is no meaning to sorrow. Was salām.

Note: Hadrat Wālā is such an expert on human sentiments and so adept at treating spiritual maladies that he did not advise the above-mentioned seeker – who was on the verge of committing suicide – to be happy over his condition for this would have entailed asking him to do something which was virtually impossible and the advice would not have been of any use. Glory to Allāh! This is how a Hakīm al-Ummah ought to be.

Hadrat Wālā says on a similar topic: "When any person passes away and I consider it necessary to deliver a lecture at the deceased's place, then I only do it after a considerable number

of days have passed. If I were to deliver a lecture while their sorrow is still fresh, the lecture will go to waste.

Consolation to a depressed woman

I recall another incident on the subject of consolation. Although it is not related to the spiritual, it will not be inappropriate to relate it here. My wife was to undergo an operation which posed a danger to her life. We were all extremely worried. She dictated a very despairing letter to me in which she requested Hadrat Wālā's prayers. Hadrat Wālā's reply reached us on the exact day of the operation. He wrote: "I pray with all my heart and soul that – Allāh willing – the operation will be successful. Allāh willing, you will recover and come here [to Thānah Bhawan]."

This glad-tiding brought us all to life and it seemed as if we were injected with new life. It reduced our worry to a great extent and, instead of despair, our hopes had the upper-hand. My wife too was very much consoled and stepped into the operation theatre in a tranquil state. It is not Hadrat Wālā's practice to make such predictions. However, since the patient severely needed her courage to be strengthened, he placed his trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and wrote what he wrote. There is a Hadīth in which Allāh *taʿālā* states that there are some of My servants who, if they take an oath after placing their reliance on Me, I ensure that their oath is fulfilled.

The operation was very successful and the patient recovered fully. She also had an opportunity of visiting Hadrat Wālā. She is residing with me in Thānah Bhawan for the last two years. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. A poet rightly says:

> Allāh *taʿālā* fulfils the objectives of the righteous.

Difference between hope and enthusiasm

A seeker came to the Khānqāh to spend a few days there. In the course of one of Hadrat Wālā's conversations, the man heard Hadrat Wālā quoting the following statement of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib: "It is better for a person's body to be in India and his heart to be attached to Makkah than to be living physically in Makkah while his heart is attached to India." The man applied this to his own condition in the Khānqāh and became very worried when he thought about the fact that although he is staying in the Khānqāh, he is thinking a lot of his wife and

children, and is counting the days when he would be leaving. He wrote a note to Hadrat Wālā describing these thoughts and added: "Based on the statement of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, my stay here in the Khānqāh has gone to waste." Hadrat Wālā wrote a very consoling and erudite reply. It is quoted here from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. He wrote:

Thoughts of one's family and constantly thinking about them are natural and from among the Sharʿī rights of one's family. They are praiseworthy. What is blameworthy is when a person leaves them and feels regretful for having left them and come here. In short, a hope is one thing and is harmful, while enthusiasm is something else and is not harmful. When a person is fasting, he desires food and drink and waits for that time to come, but he does not hope and think to himself that if would have been good had I not been fasting.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a fine explanation. Look at the intricate difference which Hadrat Wālā explained between hope and enthusiasm. Even philosophers and expert psychologists could not have thought this up. These realities are exposed to only the super-specialist spiritual physicians of the community of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

A general principle to control one's natural inclinations

A seeker complained about an intense inclination towards music. He wrote that he even went to the extent of calling a flute-player and asking him to play for him. Hadrat Wālā's reply is quoted from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*:

It is generally not possible to put a complete end to an attraction and inclination. However, it can be weakened through careful planning to the extent that it is not difficult to combat. There is only one step and procedure for it, viz. to practically oppose that inclination. Although you may experience difficulty, you will have to bear it. In this way, some people are able to weaken the inclination quickly while it takes longer for others. This is dependent on differences in temperament. There is always a need for resolve and courage to abstain. However, when it weakens, one is able to succeed in his resolution very quickly. Expecting to achieve anything more is merely a hope and nothing else. Unless, off course it is a supernatural feat. Once this principle is understood and

adopted, all worries from natural inclinations are blown away. Bear this in mind and thank Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! The entire world is vexed by natural inclinations and resorts to thousands of plans and procedures but cannot succeed. Look at the comprehensive, effective, unique and simple principle provided by Hadrat Wālā. Look at the beneficial and matchless procedure which he taught in order to bring balance in one's life.

The effect of Hadrat Wālā's focus

I personally experienced this and got confirmation for it from my fellow Pīr Bhāis that without even writing a note to Hadrat Wālā, I experience a decrease in my worries. And once I receive a letter from him, all worries are completely removed. In fact, many times I can perceive when my letter has reached Hadrat Wālā. Because after reading my letter, his focus turns towards me and I perceive a powerful pull. I experience this constantly during my present stay at the Khānqāh. If I am not present in an assembly and Hadrat Wālā happens to think of me because of some work which has to do with me, then no matter where I am, I suddenly experience a turning towards Allāh *taʿālā*. I understand by it that Hadrat Wālā is most probably thinking of me at the moment and directing his focus towards me. However, since this thinking is not on the level of conviction, I do not leave my work and go to him solely on the basis of this pull.

Hadrat Wālā's focus creates a pull

This happened just a few days ago. I had asked Hadrat Wālā about a couplet which I could not remember. Hadrat Wālā quoted just one couplet from it and said: "I only recall this one line." Then after the zuhr assembly, I proceeded to my room which was at quite a distance from Hadrat Wālā's sitting place and I got occupied with writing this book, *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. Hadrat Wālā wrote the entire couplet on a piece of paper and sent it to me. The whole couplet is:

> Peace be on you when you are in my heart. Although
> you are out of sight, you are present in my heart.

Hadrat Wālā was writing this couplet and sending it to me while I was experiencing that pull which I described above. The pull was so strong and intense that I felt I should get up

immediately and present myself before him because I was quite convinced that Hadrat Wālā is thinking of me at the time. However, since I was occupied with my work, I did not rely on my conviction and continued writing. I was virtually convinced when the note reached me. The beauty of the entire episode was that the couplet was of the same theme and in line with the condition which I was experiencing. I also feel it was possible that Hadrat Wālā was conscious of the subject matter at the time when he was writing it and its reflection was cast onto my heart. I took a lot of joy in taking this particular meaning from the couplet that Hadrat Wālā was addressing me personally through this couplet. I am saying this because I felt that Hadrat Wālā was really thinking of me at the time.

Some time ago, I was in the room of a person who was living upstairs. I felt a pull and I immediately thought that Hadrat Wālā was thinking of me at the time. Since I was free, I went downstairs immediately to present myself before him. Hadrat Wālā had a note in his hand, waiting for someone to come by so that he could call for me. In the meantime, I reached there myself. He said: "I was about to call for you." Hadrat Wālā began to smile when I described the pull which I felt in my heart. Hadrat Wālā does not consider such matters to be worthy of any attention and considers them to be merely products of one's imagination. Another point which is worthy of mention here is that whenever I experience such a pull, it is always accompanied with a consciousness of Allāh's presence. In other words, I immediately experience the presence of Allāh *taʿālā*. I consider this to be the result of Hadrat Wālā's focus and think to myself that his attention is turned to me at present and he is thinking of me.

The effects of Hadrat Wālā's writing

I also remember my impressions of my early days. When I used to receive Hadrat Wālā's letters, merely looking at the writing used to cause a special condition in my heart no matter what I was occupied in at the time. I recall to this day how I experienced such a special condition at the exact time when I had presented myself in court.

Presence of Allāh is perceived

When I used to leave Hadrat Wālā after having presented myself before him, I would experience a unique presence of

Allāh *taʿālā* on my way back. It used to be a joyful and powerful condition which I would be immersed in throughout the way. I clearly recall one of those occasions. I was so overcome by Allāh's presence that on my way back, I was walking like a madman with my hands making a circle, as if I was encircling my beloved. On another of such occasions, I was repeating the following couplet of H̱āfiẕ Shīrāzī *raḫimahullāh*, was completely overwhelmed by it and was reduced to sobbing.

> O Khiḏr! Help a bashful person like me because I am on foot while my companion is riding on his conveyance.

The heart experiences a unique emotion

On one occasion, after I remained in H̱aḏrat Wālā's company for one month and was taking leave from him, my heart experienced a unique emotion. I was very affected by it and a few couplets came spontaneously to my mind. I still recall some of them.

> Look at this abundant affection to me. I was not worthy of it.
>
> May I be sacrificed for this mercy of yours. I was not worthy of it.
>
> O the most Affectionate one! This had been decreed since eternity from Your court.
>
> You embraced me fully under your wing. I was not worthy of it.
>
> The One is my deity, and the best of the creation is my Prophet.
>
> My shaykh too is the Quṯb of his time. I was not worthy of it.

Presenting myself with yearning and enthusiasm

I described my emotions when I was leaving H̱aḏrat Wālā. I feel I should describe them when I presented myself before him.

I mentioned previously that I used to bear many expenses and long journeys for just a few hours of H̱aḏrat Wālā's company. Moreover, I used to take lengthy half-paid and unpaid leaves, and remain with him for months, and sometimes for years. By the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, I have presently taken two years and

four month's leave and am in his service. I presented myself with genuine yearning and enthusiasm on each of these occasions. In my extreme joy, I would recite couplets which described my condition. Each time I presented myself before him was a manifestation of the following couplet:

> O beloved! The fire of your separation has turned my heart into a kebab. The flood of enthusiasm to see you has made my body hollow.

I got an opportunity to go to Thānah Bhawan after a very long time. I penned many couplets on this occasion. Some of them are quoted here so that the reader will be able to gauge my condition:

> I did not get a chance to go to the house of love for many years.
>
> The desire to sing out in an intoxicated way filled my heart for many years.
>
> There was a time when the heart was the Ka'bah, it [the heart] has become an idol-house for many years.
>
> I have been restless since many years to see you manifest yourself.
>
> I have been turned over by the intoxicating eye of the mistress for many years.
>
> I have been walking around with my empty measure for many years.
>
> My yearning-filled heart goes to that gathering in this way, where I see a beautiful form which I hadn't seen for so many years.

Taking a long unpaid leave to present myself

Before giving up my post as a deputy collector, I had taken a long unpaid leave and decided that I will not go to work until I get a job in the education department – for which I had applied.

My extreme joy at getting a room in the Khānqāh

On the same occasion, I was informed that there were two rooms available for my stay in the Khānqāh and that one of them which had been used by Hadrat Wālā at some time in the

past was now available for me. I was overjoyed when I came to know of this.

Enthusiasm along the way

Whenever I had the occasion to come to Thānah Bhawan, I used to come with real enthusiasm and yearning. My entire journey used to be filled with eagerness and zeal. On one of those occasions, I was accompanied by like-minded Pīr Bhāis. We were picturing Hadrat Wālā throughout our journey and singing the following couplet with real emotion:

> Any person who treads the path of love without a guide is bound to pass his entire life without learning anything about love.

Bearing in mind that these companions were Pīr Bhāis, very informal friends and love poets [who composed poetry on Allāh's love], our emotions increased as we moved along. There were no other passengers on our coach apart from us and a few Nepalese army people. On seeing our mood, the Nepalese began singing along and some of them even started to dance. On seeing them like this, my friends said to me: "Look! These people have been affected by your enthusiasm and zeal."

Tranquillity on reaching Thānah Bhawan

In short, whether I was coming to meet Hadrat Wālā or leaving his blessed company, the journey was always filled with emotion, but my mood used to settle down once I met him. Hadrat Sheftah *rahimahullāh* says:

> The intelligent ones get up and leave your presence as madmen. And madmen sit in your assembly as though they are intelligent people.

When I asked Hadrat Wālā the reason for this, he said: "When a person is far away, he is overcome by enthusiasm and yearning, but when he is near, he experiences affinity. There is zeal in yearning, and tranquillity in affinity."

I [the compiler] say: As a result of this tranquillity, sometimes a seeker incorrectly feels that he has become like a new and inexperienced person. Consequently, in the course of his stay at the Khānqāh, one of the khulafā' felt that he had become like this. He noted his complaint and also quoted the following couplets of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* with genuine remorse:

> You are given a pure drink, you are in a safe place and an affectionate friend is the one who is giving you this drink. O heart! If you cannot achieve anything even under such excellent circumstances, when will you ever achieve it?

Hadrat Wālā comforted his khalīfah by saying: "The moon appears to be lightless in the presence of the sun, while it is not really lightless. Instead, it continues deriving light from the sun. However, it does not perceive and realize its own light when in the presence of the sun."

Meditation for consolation

The incidents on the subject of consolation which were quoted above contained Hadrat Wālā's consolation of the seekers. I now relate an incident which shows how he consoled his own self.

On experiencing a most unfortunate incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for firmly embedding the meditation of His being and Absolute King and Most Wise in my heart. This enabled me overcome the worst of tragedies – whether they were related to the external or internal self – and did not cause me to experience any worry and stress. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, when I meditated on these two attributes of Allāh *taʿālā*, my mind became fully convinced that Allāh *taʿālā* is the Absolute King and the Most Wise."

"Bearing in mind that Allāh *taʿālā* is the Absolute King, He has the full authority to do as and when He wills to His creation. He has full right and authority to do whatever and whenever He wills to His creation both externally and internally. No one can express the slightest complaint. Bearing in mind that He is Most Wise, I am fully at ease with the fact that whatever He does is done with absolute wisdom. There is therefore no reason whatsoever for me to worry and stress."

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a high level of meditation. If this is firmly embedded in a person, he will not experience any type of external or internal worry. I will now conclude this theme of consolation which came in coincidentally with this blessed story. I will quote a few more incidents related to other themes and conclude my own story. I will then quote Hadrat Wālā's general statements on the theme of spiritual training. May

Allāh *taʿālā* help me. Inspiration is only from Him, I place my trust in Him and I turn to Him.

Fourth Story: A Treatment For Imaginary Sins

I was severely affected by sins which were solely in my mind. I was so affected by them that I was on the verge of considering myself to be rejected. The inundation of evil thoughts embittered my life and I almost lost hope about my own reformation. A thought is something which enters a person's mind very swiftly - without even perceiving it – and moves from one point to another in a matter of split seconds. When a person is distressed by them, it becomes difficult to identify which level of its occurrence or continuance is within one's choice and which is not. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult to repulse a thought.

In short, it is relatively easier to save one's self from sins which are connected to one's body parts than those which are connected to one's thoughts. The diagnosis and treatment of the first is easier. While the second, because it is unseen and can cause confusion, is difficult to diagnose and treat.

I was in a state of real worry when I wrote to Hadrat Wālā and described my situation to him. Although he was very weak at the time, he penned an excellent treatment. The illness which I considered to be a mountain was reduced to bits. The life which appeared very bitter became – through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – forever enjoyable. This is because he wrote a very simple, comprehensive and all-embracing treatment which can be made a model forever. All sins of the mind, e.g. pride, ostentation, evil thoughts, fantasies, jealousy, malice, hatred, etc. can be easily abstained from provided a person is conscious of the treatment.

Another advantage of his treatment is that it is a treatment on one hand, and also a gauge to identify between wilful and unwitting thoughts. Through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's prayers and focus, the moment I read his reply which contained the treatment, my thoughts disappeared as if they did not even exist. It is my strong hope that – Allāh willing - anyone having even the slightest affinity with the path will be able to treat all his internal illnesses of the mind from the following treatment prescribed by Hadrat Wālā. After seeing the comprehensiveness and benefit of this reply, Hadrat Wālā

himself gave it a title of its own, viz. the treatment for thoughts. Many seekers who heard it from me made copies of it. This demonstrates its benefit and general need. The reply follows:

> A simple treatment for it is that when you are inundated with thoughts, you must wilfully and wittingly direct yourself towards pious thoughts and remain focussed in that direction. If, after this, the thoughts remain and new thoughts come to you, then they are certainly not within your control. This is because two conflicting types of thoughts cannot come together by one's choice [one will have to be wilful and the other unintentional]. Confusion in this regard is now removed. If you experience any negligence in wilfully directing yourself to good thoughts and then you realize your negligence, you must make up for it through seeking forgiveness. You must then follow it with the same treatment as described.
>
> There is no simpler method. Make it your code of practice and do not worry after that.

Fifth Story: Differences In Approach To Desirable Acts

I was with Hadrat Wālā on a journey to Delhi. As was his practice, he went for his morning walk while reciting the Qur'ān. Some people joined him but he stopped them because when he is not used to the company of certain people as yet, he finds himself distracted. I was on the verge of joining the others to go back, but Hadrat Wālā called me and as we proceeded he said: "The prohibition was for those with whom I am not informal as yet." He added: "If every woman desires to be treated like a wife it will be foolishness on her part."

Hadrat Wālā used to say in this regard: "Initially, for a long time I was on this misunderstanding that every person must be treated in the same manner. I had to bear many discomforts because of it. Allāh *taʿālā* then exposed this reality to me that there is no need for this because the special treatment which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* accorded to Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was not accorded to others. When he used to see these two in his assemblies, he would overjoyed and smile. They too would be happy at seeing him and smile. This shows that equal

treatment in obligatory acts is essential, but not in desirable acts.

Sixth Story: Picturing One's Shaykh

I still recall my days of zeal and enthusiasm when I used to imagine that Hadrat Wālā has pervaded my entire body from head to toe, and I have pervaded his entire body from head to toe. This used to bring me intense joy for long periods of time. I recall Hadrat Wālā's statement in this regard: "If a person unwittingly pictures and imagines his shaykh, there is no harm in it. Instead, it is beneficial. If not, he must think of Allāh *taʿālā* only because He is the sole and original objective. This was the teaching of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib."

Seventh Story: An Example Of An Average And A Seasoned Seeker

I accompanied Hadrat Wālā on one of his morning walks. On the way we came across two farms on the left and right sides of the road. One had matured and become totally dry. The other was still flowering and was very green, lush and attractive. Hadrat Wālā's heart knows only one thing, he is conscious of it all the time and his mind goes to it even when it bears the slightest similarity. The moment he saw these two fields, he said to me: "Look! This is the difference in the conditions of an average and a seasoned seeker. The condition of an average seeker is like this green and lush farm which appears very attractive, but in its present condition is of no use apart from being cut and given as food to cattle. On the other hand, this plantation of wheat which has matured and become dry, it may appear colourless, unattractive and dry, it contains seeds and grains which are the actual objectives of cultivating them. You can acquire grain from them whenever you like and use the grain as food. In short, one is only suitable as fodder for cattle while the other is food for humans."

"In the same way, an average seeker only experiences conditions which appear to be very good and are considered to be indications of piety. On the other hand, a seasoned seeker may appear to be completely devoid of conditions, but he has the original and fundamental treasure and wealth."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how well this example applies!

Eighth Story: Imprints On The Heart

On one occasion Hadrat Wālā was speaking against the prints which we normally see on prayer mats and complained that they divert the heart of the person performing salāh. He added: "I do not even like clothes which are embroidered with flowers even though I myself wear them. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I do not speak in favour of such garments just because I wear them." He then said: "Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* received a sheet which was embossed with flowers as a gift. After the salāh, he asked the person for a plain sheet, kept the embossed one aside and said: "The prints on this sheet almost occupied my heart." If Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* saw the possibility of being diverted, who is there among us who can claim that our heart cannot be diverted by such prints and designs." Hadrat Wālā added: "How can prints and designs of clothes be liked when the spiritual masters say that even the heart should not have any prints on it. Prints and designs on the heart refer to the states and conditions of the heart. The heart ought to be empty of all such things. It ought to contain absolute servitude. The bidʿatīs are very attached to states and conditions while the spiritual masters dislike them. Anyway, this is in itself a condition which cannot be understood merely through an explanation. They can only be understood when they are personally experienced." Hadrat Wālā then quoted two couplets of Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* in his *Mathnawī* and said: "I am happy over the fact that I recalled these couplets because they support what I just said. It appeared to be something new but these couplets prove that it is nothing new. It is supported by the statements of the spiritual masters of the past."

Ninth Story: Thinking Of The Fruits Of Dhikr

One day Hadrat Wālā either said to me or said in a general address that one should neither expect to see the fruits of dhikr nor imagine any condition or state in one's mind. One should not allow one's imagination to influence one in any way. All conditions must be handed over to Allāh *taʿālā* and He will confer whatever He considers best and most appropriate to one's capabilities.

It is enough for a person to have a moderate focus on the dhikr at the time of dhikr or, if it can be easily achieved, to turn his

focus on the Being who is remembered. The condition of "moderate" has been attached because excessive focus causes affliction to the heart and mind. This causes a defect in even in the situations where focus is essential. There is another point which is also very essential in this regard: Do not allow the demands to see the fruits [of dhikr] to develop in one's temperament because apart from causing confusion – which harms one concentration which is the basis of benefit in this path – it could result in despondency. I have personally experienced this. I am naturally demanding and hasty, and this is Allāh's mercy or else I would not have been able to serve the Dīn as much as I did. The very same demanding and hasty disposition would cause me distress to the extent of experiencing whisperings of suicide. I felt this demand all the time that I must quickly acquire whatever I have to and there must be no delay in it.

Tenth Story: Practising On Concessions

Hadrat Wālā said one day in the course of one of his discussions: As regards certain conditions, I consider acting on concessions as opposed to obligations to be rectification. This is because the person who always practises on obligations may look at his actions with pride and feel that whatever he is receiving for them is less than what he ought to receive. A complaint will come into his heart and he will think to himself: "I have been bearing such difficulties of asceticism and piety for so long and I have been occupying myself for so long in dhikr and spiritual practices but I have not been conferred with anything as yet." What a filthy thought! On the other hand, the one who acts on concessions occasionally can never look at his actions with pride and will consider his dhikr and spiritual practices to be lopsided. No matter what he receives, he will consider it in excess of his actions. Even if he does not experience any spiritual states and conditions, he can never develop any complaint because he thinks to himself that his actions are in no way worthy of fruits. Whereas the first person will always expect major fruits and results, and when he is not given them, he will complain. No matter what, the one who practises on concessions relies more on prayers to Allāh *taʿālā* then on his own actions. This naturally creates love for Allāh *taʿālā*. What a great bounty this is!

The fact of the matter is that our hearts – especially in these times – are so weak that they do not develop love for Allāh *taʿālā* without witnessing His mercy. I shouldn't be really saying this because people will become lax in their actions, but because there was a greater danger in the case of not mentioning it, I said it. Now that I have said that this should not be really discussed, we can understand that there is the possibility of misunderstandings on this subject. I have, so to speak, issued a warning that if anyone has any misunderstanding this regard, he must revert to a spiritual master; he must not derive his own incorrect meaning. It was for the very purpose of removing any misunderstanding that I attached this precondition in the beginning that I consider acting on concessions for only "certain conditions" to be more beneficial in the field of rectification. As for acting on obligations, this in itself is certainly superior as is obvious.

The Reality Of Abstinence

In the course of the above discussion, a scholar said: "But there is a lot of virtue in abstinence?!" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Abstinence does not mean abstaining totally from pleasures, rather reducing pleasures is sufficient for abstinence. In other words, a person must not be so immersed in pleasures that he worries about them all the time, causing him to think that such and such food has to be cooked or I ought to purchase such and such item. He hears that rice from a particular place is of a high quality, so he makes sure he obtains it from there. He hears that cream from a certain place is of a high quality so he asks someone to bring it for him from there. He is constantly worried about wearing expensive clothes and eating exotic dishes. All these things certainly negate abstinence. But if a person obtains certain pleasures without paying special attention to them, this is considered to be Allāh's bounty and he must be grateful to Allāh *taʿālā* for it.

In the same way, eating too little is not abstinence and is neither the objective. Allāh forbid, our eating less will not ensure our value in the treasures of Allāh *taʿālā*. We will never be considered to be very munificent employees who do not take their full wage. Allāh *taʿālā* does not bother about such matters. At the same time, do not eat so much that you get a stomach-ache. Our Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's view was that the self

should be given a very good rest and also made to work to the full.

When I learn that a certain good meal is to be cooked on a particular day, I enjoy myself doing work on that day because I think to myself that when I complete my work, I will get something good to eat. We must certainly have something which encourages the self. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib said one day: "Miyā Ashraf ʿAlī! You must always drink cold water so that you thank Allāh *taʿālā* from the depths of your heart. If the water is warm, you will thank Allāh *taʿālā* verbally but your heart will not."

Eleventh Story: The Conditions Of An Average And A Seasoned Seeker

On one occasion Hadrat Wālā went to the bathroom of the musjid to fetch hot water. He personally went to bring it because he did not like to ask anyone to carry out such tasks for him if he was not yet comfortable and open with the person. There was no such person present at the time. When he removed the lid of the drum [in which the water was heated], a fine steam emanated which felt very good. At the same time, smoke from the bottom – where the fire was heating the drum – emanated, got into his eyes and caused them to burn. After relating this incident, he said: "This is the difference in the conditions of an average and a seasoned seeker. The seasoned seeker is not devoid of conditions but they are very subtle and fine like the steam. They are fine because they stem from spirituality. On the other hand, the conditions of an average seeker are raging and burning; there is no fineness in them; as is the case with smoke. They are like this because they stem from the person's disposition.

Twelfth Story: Spiritual Exercises

One day there was no breeze at all, it was scorching hot and people were perspiring. After the compulsory salāh, the attendants surrounded Hadrat Wālā and began fanning him. Hadrat Wālā as yet had to perform the Sunnah salāh, so he remained standing so that his perspiration could dry because he never permitted anyone to fan him while he was performing salāh. The reason why he did not permit it is that he felt it most unbecoming of a person to adopt the status of one who is served while performing salāh. Anyway, all the attendants were fanning him when a cool breeze suddenly blew that way and

refreshed the souls. Hadrat Wālā stopped the fanners immediately and said: "Glory to Allāh! The comfort and relief which this natural breeze brought were not experienced with so many fans. A single gust of natural breeze is most certainly much better than a thousand fans."

Hadrat Wālā added: "In the same way, a thousand spiritual exercises and forms of striving cannot produce the results which can be realized from a single pull from Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: I now conclude my long story with this theme on the divine pull of Allāh *taʿālā* as related by Hadrat Wālā. I have witnessed and heard thousands of incidents and statements of Hadrat Wālā; how many can I relate here! If any reader is desirous of more he may refer to the first volume of *Ahsan al-ʿAzīz* in which I penned a considerable number of statements which I personally heard and incidents which I myself witnessed.

The sole purpose behind relating my personal incidents and conditions in this section was to demonstrate Hadrat Wālā's power of bestowal and instruction. If in the course of relating incidents, the incidents of the writer himself and within them the conditions and teachings of the one whose biography is written are included, they will prove to be more convincing. My personal accounts are really manifestations of the following couplet of Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*:

> The best thing is to relate the secrets of the beloveds
> through the stories of others.

If it were not for the above reason, recounting my own stories was extremely embarrassing for me and still is. In fact, I feel I should remove all these stories but since they have already been included in the manuscript, it is quite difficult to remove them. Furthermore, I do not have the time to rewrite the themes and conditions related to Hadrat Wālā which were mentioned within my own stories. I therefore request the reader to focus on the original objective of presenting the life of Hadrat Wālā, and to turn a blind eye to my own conditions. I request the reader to pray for my rectification.

I now conclude with a statement of Hadrat Wālā which he wrote in one of his letters to me. I am quoting it to support what I just said in the previous paragraph: "If in the course of this insignificant person's [i.e. Hadrat Wālā's] biography,

anyone expresses his own condition, then it is not disagreeable because it is not intentional."

In short, I received permission from Hadrat Wālā to express some of my own conditions in his biography.

INSTRUCTIONS AND EXHORTATIONS

As promised, I now present some of Hadrat Wālā's exhortations – both the published ones and the unpublished ones. These have been penned specifically by Hadrat Wālā. *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* is a collection of Hadrat Wālā's impeccable prescriptions and diagnoses which emanated from his spiritual clinic. It would be perfectly in order to refer to it as a complete pharmacopoeia of Sufism. It contains countless letters from seekers with Hadrat Wālā's replies. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* this programme is continuing to this day. May Allāh *taʿālā* increase it and enable it to flourish.

I collated 100 letters and replies at random and present them here to the reader. In order to avoid this section becoming too lengthy, I quoted the crux of the letters of the seekers, but in a manner which preserves the essence of what they wrote. However, Hadrat Wālā's replies are quoted verbatim because this is the real objective here.

Tarbīyyatus Sālik is filled with unique and unparalleled spiritual facts which could be referred to as a treasure of jewels. Fearing a lengthy presentation, I had to force myself and restrain my pen to restrict myself to just 100. No matter which reply of Hadrat Wālā my eyes fell on, I felt it ought to be included in this collection. The following couplet applies here:

> No matter at which spot I look from head to toe, the beauty tugs at my heart and says: "This spot is the most beautiful."

Those who are desirous of studying more of his exhortations should refer to the original *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. In the course of selecting these 100, I used to read them before Hadrat Wālā so that he could make corrections if he considered it necessary. On hearing them, those who were present in the assembly and Hadrat Wālā himself would be very much affected by them. He would say in astonishment:

> I could never have written such themes from my own knowledge [they are certainly divinely inspired]. It is solely through Allāh's grace for having enabled me to write such beneficial themes when they were needed for the rectification of the seekers. When I listen to

> the questions now and think to myself what answer I should give, I cannot come to any definitive reply. Whichever question I hear, I am confounded into thinking: What answer could I have given to such a difficult question? And when I hear the answer read to me, I am surprised and think to myself: Is this really my answer? Writing such answers is certainly beyond my knowledge. Had they been the results of my own knowledge, my knowledge at present would have certainly been the same. Why, then, are the same answers not coming to my mind now?! This clearly shows that I was helped by Allāh *taʿālā*. After all, what is my worth? I am nothing. How could I write such answers by myself?

Hadrat Wālā also said the following as a way of expressing Allāh's favours and not out of pride:

> My answers will really be appreciated when the same questions are posed to other Sufis and their replies are obtained. Thousands of thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that research and codification on all matters related to Sufism have been accomplished for several centuries to come, and it was not accomplished with such proliferation for several centuries before. This is solely through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Barhe Miyā (Hadrat Hājī Sāhib).

After this necessary prelude, the selected exhortations are presented to the reader.

1. Wish For Doubts Not To Creep In

A seeker wrote: It is my wish for doubts not to creep into me.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Tomorrow you must wish that you do not catch a fever."

Hadrat Wālā had wrote to him prior to this: "The creeping in of unintentional doubts does not negate belief in Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as true."

2. Fear Of Death

A seeker wrote: I fear and hate death whereas it is the means of meeting Allāh *taʿālā*, and the Sufis consider death to be the most beloved.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You are wrong. I have come across some spiritual masters who feared death just like you. This stems from a weak heart which is certainly not blameworthy."

The same seeker asked: What means did the Sufis acquire through which they got rid off dislike for death completely?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "It was the strength of their heart or the strength of the inspiration which they received, both of which are not objectives. They are merely conferred by Allāh *taʿālā*."

3. Dislike For A Bidʿatī

In reply to a question of a seeker, Hadrat Wālā wrote: "Dislike for a bidʿatī is not pride. However, if he repents and you still dislike him, it is pride. If not, it is dislike for Allāh's sake."

4. Recitation Of Qur'ān And Spiritual Practices

After learning about the virtues of reciting the Qur'ān, a seeker wanted to give up all other spiritual practices and restrict himself to reciting the Qur'ān. Hadrat Wālā wrote: "More inclination towards a particular practice only occurs when other practices are present. If not, one becomes fed up of the same thing. A major proof of this is that the pious predecessors did not do this."

5. Acquisition Of Affinity And The Disappearance Of The Effects Of Pride

A senior khalīfah asked: What are the effects of the acquisition of affinity? He also asked about the disappearance of the effects of pride. Hadrat Wālā replied: "These are all matters related to assumptions like the assumption of good physical health. However, satisfaction in this regard is said to be like conviction. As for the effects of the acquisition of affinity, they are: Continuous obedience [to Allāh *taʿālā*], actions which are within one's choice become as if they are now second nature to the person, rare instances of disobedience, severe regret and intense efforts to make up for incidental acts of disobedience, overpowering dhikr with the tongue and heart, i.e. consciousness and awareness of Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the second point, it essentially boils down to the sentiment of the patient and this is supported by the effects. In other words, the absence of incidents of pride, overwhelming effects of humility and intense remorse over actions which smack of pride.

6. Love For Allāh

A seeker wrote: I am engaging in verbal dhikr but I see no effects whatsoever of it in my heart. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, my actions are consistent but I feel that my heart is devoid of love for Him. Hadrat Wālā replied: "What type of love is your heart devoid of? Of doctrinal and rational love or of natural love? If it is the latter, it is not harmful. If it is the former, you would not remorse over its absence. Why are you remorseful over it? Your remorse is in itself proof that you are not devoid of love."

The same seeker also wrote: My condition is certainly not as it ought to be. Hadrat Wālā replied: "That day will be a day of mourning when you think you have acquired the condition which you ought to have because even the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* feel that they have not acquired the condition as they ought to have acquired. They say:

ما عبدناك حق عبادتك

We have not worshipped You as You ought to have been worshipped.

7. Safeguarding One's Self Against Evil Gazes

A seeker wrote: When I am overcome with an urge to cast evil gazes, I console myself by saying to myself: What benefit is there in committing a sin which does not bring any benefit? Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is a very beneficial and effective meditation."

8. A Gaze Which Is Not Sinful

A seeker wrote: If my gaze falls on a young boy or woman while I am walking about, I shift my gaze immediately. What I would like to know is that is the first glance a cause of sin or not? Hadrat Wālā replied: "Is the first gaze intentional or not? If there is no intent in it, is there any intent in its continuation or not? If there is no intention in its continuation as well, then the image which forms in the mind after this gaze, do you intend the continuation of that image or the continuation of that enjoyment?"

The seeker also wrote: After shifting my gaze, an image of whom I saw develops in my mind. But there are times when I

do not remember repulsing that image the moment it comes to my mind.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is essential to remember it. If you cannot remember it, write a warning against it on a piece of paper and tie it to your wrist or side [so that it serves as a reminder]."

9. Freedom From The Habit Of Speaking Lies

Hadrat Wālā posed a question to a seeker: "Do you speak a lie by your own will or out of compulsion?" The seeker replied: "It is by my own will but because I am so immersed in speaking lies it has become like a compulsion. I request Hadrat's treatment."

Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "When you give it up by taking the courage and by your own will, and impose on yourself to make this your habit, then not speaking lies will become like a compulsion. This is the treatment for it."

10. The Effects Of Studying The Books Of Polytheists And Perverse People

An erudite scholar is a murīd of another shaykh. He is translating the Qur'ān into English, and in order to refute the objections of the perverse ones, he has to read and study their books. He wrote to Hadrat Wālā thus: "I would like to relate something about my heart. During the days when I get to read a lot of books on Sufism, especially *Kalīd Mathnawī* (referring to the commentary of the *Mathnawī* written by Hadrat Wālā), *Ihyā' al-'Ulūm* and other similar books, I perceive a special joy in my heart, softness in my temperament, and I see very pure dreams. Now that I am busy translating the Qur'ān and am occupied in responding to the objections of the perverse ones, I find a considerable drop in the above-described condition. Presently, I have stopped studying books on Sufism completely and am reading thousands of pages on the beliefs of the polytheists and enemies of Islam. Is this darkness and severity not the result of reading these books?"

Hadrat Wālā replied:

Reading their books is the reason for the difference in your condition, however it is not really darkness or severity because darkness and severity are always doctrinal while your present

condition and effect is natural. For example, a person has an aversion to eating excreta. It is likened to the real darkness and severity. Another is the dislike a person experiences when impurity falls on his hands or feet. It is likened to the present condition and effect which you are experiencing. Obviously, eating excreta – which is a sin – is harmful spiritually while impurity falling on the body is not spiritually harmful. In fact, if you have to touch the impurity on your body or on the body of another with the intention of removing it, it would be more beneficial to the internal self because it is an act of obedience. As for the natural foulness and vexation which is experienced, it will be a source of reward because of the striving to remove it. Thereafter, when the hand is rubbed with soil or soap and washed, it will become cleaner than what it was. By the will of Allāh, you are occupied in purification. This will result in an increase in your purity and effulgence. However, it would be better if you use the soap at the same time. In other words, continue reading some books on Sufism and engage in a bit of dhikr.

11. How To Create A Habit For Qur'ān Recitation

A seeker complained: I find it difficult to read even one pārā/juz of the Qur'ān. In fact, I miss out on this reading most of the time. But I do not experience any burden in other forms of dhikr and reading the Qur'ān from memory throughout the day.

Hadrat Wālā replied: If you have not memorized the Qur'ān, you must impose on yourself to read more. While reading, you must think to yourself that ten rewards for each letter are being recorded in your book of deeds. Where else can you receive such a treasure!? Thinking in this manner is not merely a figment of your imagination but the reality because a Hadīth clearly makes mention of these rewards. You must also meditate over the fact that one is rewarded for looking at the letters of the Qur'ān. This collective imagination will remove the burden which you are experiencing and looking into the Qur'ān and reading will gradually become easier. If you have memorized the Qur'ān and are able to read correctly from memory, you will be rewarded for reading it in this way as well because the actual objective is realized. There is no need to pay too much of attention to it."

12. The Condition Of A Novice

A seeker wrote: I am experiencing a strange condition these days. I feel like repeating the words “Allāh Allāh” all the time. My heart is not inclined to anything else. In fact, the interest which I previously had in Hadīth lessons and reading the Qur’ān is no longer there.

Hadrat Wālā replied: “This generally happens in the beginning. Like an infant who likes milk all the time. But as time goes on, he develops a liking for other foods as well.”

Note: Another seeker had made a similar complaint. Hadrat Wālā wrote to him: “This generally happens in the beginning and is also experienced towards the end. In most cases, the reason for this is that there is a type of simplicity and plainness in dhikr, while a type of complexity in the Qur’ān and Hadīth. There is more concentration in plainness and more confusion in complexity because of the various aspects which the latter contains.

13. A Test Of Pride

A seeker who had spent some time in the Khānqāh wrote: I do not perceive any pride in me at present. I request Hadrat to provide me with a few points whereby I could test whether I still have pride or it has left me.

Hadrat Wālā replied: “A few points to test pride are not enough. Different temperaments respond differently to what causes pride and what does not. You should therefore not bother about such a test. If you have a doubt in any particular matter, inform me and I will advise you accordingly.”

The same person also posed other questions: I am overwhelmed with love for Hadrat. I think of Hadrat most of the time in my salāh and sometimes think of you even for the sake of concentration in salāh.

Hadrat Wālā: “This should not be done wittingly and intentionally in salāh.”

The person: “I do not feel like leaving the Khānqāh but I plan to leave tomorrow because of my Madrasah.”

Hadrat Wālā: “Sometimes distance is more beneficial than closeness.”

The person: "I perceive a certain fear for Hadrat causing me to lose courage to speak to you."

Hadrat Wālā: "This stems from a tinge of feelings of awe. It is most beneficial in the path."

14. Dislike For Evil Gazes

A seeker wrote: I do not find a dislike for evil gazes within me. I have to strive to curtail my self.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "We are ordered to dislike it or to abstain from acting on its demands."

15. The Humility Of A Khalīfah

A khalīfah wrote: I feel most bashful when anyone comes to me and requests bayʿah at my hands. I think to myself: He is better than me in every way, how can I accept his bayʿah?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Continue accepting murīds so that your humility increases."

16. Sternness

A person who is pledged to another shaykh wrote: There are times when I become extremely stern and strict on matters relating to Dīn and this world. I lose control over myself.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Be conscious and aware of your moods all the time. Impose on yourself to repeat this consciousness and awareness. This is the treatment for it. It will eventually become your second nature."

The same person also wrote: "When I reprimand people repeatedly about salāh and other acts, and they still do not pay heed, I become angry at them. I then think to myself that my anger was for my self, and why are they not listening to me?"

Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is an easy test for it. Check if your anger is the same or close to it when someone else reprimands them."

17. The Method Of Rectification

A seeker wrote: I do not know the method of rectification. Please prescribe a method for me.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The method is for you to express each defect of yours to me and ask me for a treatment for it. You

must then practise on what I say to you and inform me after practising on it."

18. Punctuality In Salāh And Qur'ān Recitation

A seeker wrote: I have to impose on myself to perform salāh and read the Qur'ān. Please show me a way which would convert this need to impose into ease and enthusiasm.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is no procedure for it. This matter is neither in the control of the shaykh nor of the seeker."

Similarly, a BA graduate seeker wrote: I believe salāh to be essential but I am not inclined to it. When I do experience an inclination, I do not experience any enjoyment in my salāh.

Hadrat Wālā replied to the first point: "What is essential, for you to be inclined or for you to incline yourself?" His reply to the second point was: "What is essential, to experience joy or to carry out the action?"

Another seeker wrote: "I do not experience any joy in my spiritual practices and devotions." Hadrat Wālā replied: "What is the objective, joy or presence of mind and heart? And that too, what type of presence, intentional or unwitting?"

19. Self-Conceit

A seeker listed a few examples of self-conceit and asked for a treatment.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "If, while you are thinking of Allāh's bounties on yourself, you think you are not receiving them because you deserve them but are gifts from Allāh *taʿālā* which He can take away immediately if He wills, and that it is solely out of His mercy that He conferred them to you without deserving them; and with regard to others, you think to yourself that although they do not enjoy the same bounties, it may well be that they have been given such merits which we are unaware of and on account of which their rank is much higher in Allāh's sight – then after these two points of contemplation, the joy and happiness which remains in you will not be considered to be self-conceit. It will either be natural joy, which is not blameworthy, or it will be gratitude when you are conscious of the favour of the true Benefactor, for which you will be rewarded."

20. Firmness In Treating Evils

In reply to a question, Hadrat Wālā wrote the signs of firmness in treating evils: "Firmness is when there is no heedlessness and disregard, and no laxity in one's determination and courage."

In reply to another question which was in Persian, Hadrat Wālā described how firmness can be acquired. He wrote: "It requires regular revision, presence of mind, to make it a constant routine, and to compensate for any weakness with a self-imposed penalty like a physical or monetary act of worship. For example, spending some wealth which is some what difficult on the individual or performing a reasonable amount of optional salāhs which are to a certain extent difficult on the self. The sign of stability and firmness will be that one does not find any difficulty in executing all that is required."

21. Unwitting Conditions In The Path Of Sufism

A seeker wrote: I had love for Hadrat before pledging bayʿah, but I perceived some awe. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* after pledging bayʿah my love has increased tremendously, but I do not perceive any awe at all.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is a blessed condition. The first condition was also blessed. All unwitting conditions in this path are absolutely good which have countless benefits and wisdoms. They may not be understood at present, but as you proceed, they will be understood automatically."

22. A Treatment For Thoughts In Salāh

A novice seeker complained about an inundation of thoughts in salāh and requested a treatment.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You yourself must focus on the words and different forms of dhikr. Thereafter if any thoughts enter your mind, they are not harmful. If you lose your focus, renew it and do not feel sorrow over losing your focus."

23. Rational Love And Natural Love

A seeker wrote: Nowadays my love for you is so overwhelming that it seems as if I have no love for anyone apart from you. I do not even think of any other person. In other words, I perceive a decrease in my love for even Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Wālā replied: “Your misgiving is incorrect. There is more rationality in love for Allāh *taʿālā* while more naturalness in love for one’s fellow people. When observed on the surface, rational love appears to be weak and dimmed before natural love. This is what causes a misgiving and doubt, whereas the opposite holds true. Therefore, if through this natural love – Allāh forbid – a person does or says something against Allāh *taʿālā*, that same beloved will become abhorred. This proves that the love of Allāh *taʿālā* is prevailing and overwhelming.”

24. Evil Glances

In reply to a seeker’s question on evil glances, Hadrat Wālā replied: “There is no treatment apart from determination and courage for it.”

25. Passionate Love

A seeker developed passionate love for one of his students. He asked: Is there any way that I could continue teaching him while having this love for him to dissipate at the same time.

Hadrat Wālā replied: “I do not know any such treatment. [Hadrat Wālā then quoted the following couplet]:

> You tied me to a slab and placed me in the bottom of the ocean. You are then saying to me: Beware, you do not become wet.

26. Pride Over One’s Recitation In Salāh

A seeker wrote: I recite lengthy sūrahs in salāh because people insist on it. Sometimes, after having completed the salāh, I feel very happy over the fact that I read very beautifully. But in my heart I think to myself that this is not my own achievement; it is solely a gift from Allāh *taʿālā*. Is this enough for the rectification of my self?

Hadrat Wālā replied: “From the prescribed sūrahs[1] which are to be recited in salāh, read those which are short; and do not read with too much of zeal. This will be a practical rectification of your situation. Your own verbal rectification [which you described] is not enough.”

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[1] Hadrat Wālā is referring to the sūrahs which are preferable to read in the different compulsory salāhs. (translator)

27. Tranquillity Is Not The Objective, Action Is

A widow wrote: Although one and half years have passed since the demise of my husband, I am extremely restless. I do my utmost to direct my heart towards Allāh *taʿālā* but I cannot develop any concentration. It is my earnest desire to be able to worship Allāh *taʿālā* with full concentration accompanied with genuine patience and acceptance of Allāh's decree.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Absolute and total tranquillity is not the objective; action is – both external and internal. You know the external [physical] actions. As for the internal, the objective is what is within your control, e.g. patience. Tranquillity and concentration are not within your control, so they are not the objectives."

28. Backbiting

On the question of a seeker Hadrat Wālā described the following treatment for backbiting:

a) Be conscious of the punishment at the time when you are backbiting.

b) Ponder carefully before you start speaking.

c) Seek pardon [from the person] after backbiting.

d) Impose a fine upon yourself, either a cash payment or performing optional acts of worship.

The same seeker wrote a few days later: "This treatment has not embedded itself completely." Hadrat Wālā replied: "It will become embedded gradually; you must continue adhering to it."

29. Councillor In A Municipality

Some people forcefully nominated one of Hadrat Wālā's khalīfah's as a councillor in a municipality. The khalīfah was terrified by this and eventually decided to consult his shaykh. He wrote to Hadrat Wālā: Hadrat, please write something in this regard so that I may attain salvation.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "As long as the connection with the Creator is not firm, unnecessary connection with the creation is most harmful. As for the benefit one envisages from serving the creation because one feels that one is serving Allāh's

creation, this right can only be fulfilled when the connection with the Creator is strong. If not, neither the right of the Creator is fulfilled nor of the creation. This has been experienced by not just one but thousands of people of insight. More firm and steadfast people than yourself and myself gave up such connections. The stories of Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Adham Balkhī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shāh Shujāʿ *rahimahullāh* are well known. We should not apply ourselves to the Khulafā' Rāshidīn."

30. Changing Conditions

A seeker wrote about his changing conditions. Hadrat Wālā replied: "I pray for you with all my heart. The elders say the following with regard to changing conditions:

> Drink one or two glasses in the assembly of enjoyment and leave. In other words, do not aspire eternal union."

31. The Illness Of Looking At Beauty

A seeker wrote about his illness of looking at beauty. As is his norm, Hadrat Wālā asked: "Is the looking at beauty within your control or not?" The seeker replied: "It is within my control but using my control to abstain from it appears difficult." Hadrat Wālā wrote as a warning: "What is so difficult? Does a person fall ill by restraining his self? Does he run out of breath? Or does he encounter any other unbearable discomfort?"

32. The Limits Of Giving Up Occupations And Interactions

A seeker wrote: I feel like selling my village, handing over the affairs of farming to someone else, cutting off all interactions with people, and spending my time in good deeds.

Hadrat Wālā asked: "Is your village, farm land and other occupations preventing you from good deeds?"

The seeker also wrote: "My mother is opposed to it but Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* says: "Remain aloof and act against your mother's advice."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "What, then, is the meaning of the following verse?

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ اَزْوَاجًا وَّذُرِّيَّةً

We had sent many Messengers before you and We had given them wives and children.[1]

In short, it does not refer to every connection and every condition. Whatever you do, think and ponder over it carefully before embarking on it."

33. The Limits Of Politeness

A seeker wrote: I am extremely and intensely polite. Sometimes this causes me to even do things which are against the Sharīʿah. The mere thought that I should not hurt the feelings of anyone makes it really difficult for me to refuse.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Finding it difficult does not mean it is beyond your control. Where politeness does not entail going against the Sharīʿah, it will be permissible to practise on it. But where it is against the Sharīʿah, it will be unlawful. Even though it may be difficult and inconvenient, you will have to bear the difficulty. There is no other treatment for it."

34. The Conditions Of A Seeker

Several parts of a seeker's letter together with Hadrat Wālā's replies are quoted below. It contains many benefits.

Condition: I am able to carry out the subservient spiritual practices but the condition of my heart is the same.

Reply: Is it not a bounty that you are receiving two meals and your health is good, even though you may not be progressing!?

Condition: I do not have any specific condition which I could describe to Hadrat.

Reply: This condition in itself was worthy of mention. Now that you informed me, I learnt something beneficial. But you will have to remember it.

Condition: Nor do I find myself worthy of describing any condition.

Reply: Belief in one's unworthiness in this path is really a sign of worthiness.

Condition: I consider myself to be absolutely nothing in this path.

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[1] Sūrah ar-Raʿd, 13: 38.

Reply: It is a blessed way of thinking.

Condition: The spiritual practices which I carry out are merely fulfilled out of habit.

Reply: Is the habit of doing good not a bounty?

Condition: Instead of engaging in loud dhikr, I engaged in silent dhikr for a few days because of some people who were sleeping nearby and also because I wanted to get rid off my tiredness. Is there anything wrong in doing this?

Reply: It is in fact more meritorious and more beneficial.

Condition: My final hours have drawn and I still consider myself to be a novice.

Reply: At least you are not sightless.

Condition: I do not see any way of success apart from coming and presenting myself before Hadrat.

Reply: Informing me of this is also a form of success.

35. Steadfastness In Abstaining From Sin

A seeker wrote: As per Hadrat Wālā's instruction, I have wilfully given up casting evil glances and evil thoughts. However, because of my weak heart, I find it difficult to remain steadfast all the time.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You must remain steadfast from your side and continue praying to Allāh *taʿālā* for steadfastness."

In the same letter the seeker asked for a treatment for salvation from desires of the self. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Tomorrow you must repent from eating unlawful food, and then ask me to pray that you get salvation from hunger." [in other words, both are impossible].

36. Lack Of Humbleness In Salāh Because Of The Intense Heat

A seeker complained: Because of the intense heat, I do not experience humbleness and concentration in salāh and other acts of worship. Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is a valid excuse."

37. The Combination Of Fear And Hope Is A Great Boon

A person penned detailed accounts of his conditions. Included among them was: Thoughts of Allāh *taʿālā* now enter the heart without hindrance and I experience indescribable joy in my

heart. However, what I would like to know is that in the presence of my shortcomings in good deeds, can I enjoy these bounties of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's unending blessings? Or are they mere figments of my imagination?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The combination of both possibilities in the heart is a great treasure. Its essence is [the Hadīth]: 'Īmān is suspended between fear and hope.' Congratulations to you."

38. Becoming Angry At One's Mother

A seeker wrote: My mother scolds and reprimands me for every single matter. I become angry at this and start fighting with her. Please treat my ailment.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The treatment for it is that you must not give any reply. Leave the room."

39. The Correct Manner Of Dhikr

A novice seeker wrote: I am living far from Hadrat. How can I engage in dhikr in the correct manner? Hadrat Wālā replied: "What is so difficult about it? Ensure that the heart and tongue join in the dhikr. This is the correct manner."

The same person also requested: Please ask such and such khalīfah of yours to demonstrate to me the method of the 12 tasbīhs.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is no need for it. These restrictions [to the number of tasbīhs] are not the objectives. The sole objective is dhikr. If one person is travelling at an average speed and another at a fast speed, the two will still reach their destination. As for the actual speed, this contains additional benefits and wisdoms for which the actual destination is not dependent."

The same seeker also wrote: "I would like to learn the correct manner of dhikr so that I can start enjoying the fruits of it." Hadrat Wālā replied: "The essence of the fruits of dhikr is reward and proximity [to Allāh *taʿālā*]."

He also wrote about trying to acquire the *Laṯā'if Sittah*[1], to which Hadrat Wālā replied: "The *haqā'iq* (realities) are the objectives, not the *laṯā'if* (subtleties)."

40. Repulsing Useless Thoughts

A seeker wrote: My weak heart causes me to be inundated by various useless thoughts when I am performing tahajjud salāh and engaged in dhikr. I think to myself: Satan must not take a form and come before me. A jinn must not come and join me in my salāh. Hadrat Wālā replied: "In such a situation, thinking of your shaykh will repulse these worrisome thoughts. But don't consider your shaykh to be present and watching."

41. The Difference Between Pride And Bashfulness

A seeker wrote with regard to pride: I happened to go to a nearby market on one occasion. I don't ever have a need to engage in any buying and selling there. I had no need to go to the butcher, but I went although I did feel a bit shy.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Bashfulness is one thing and pride is something else. Bashfulness is essential shyness which is caused by doing something against one's habit. So much so that if a person is accorded respect in a manner which he is not used to, he will feel shy. For example, a person is made to sit on an elephant and 10-20 riders are made to follow him in a procession. [He will certainly feel shy]."

The seeker wrote back: "I will certainly feel shy but I do not trust myself in the least. It may well be that I do not perceive the shame although I cannot provide any proof for it."

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[1] The *Laṯā'if Sittah* are: (1) nafs, (2) qalb, (3) rūh, (4) sirr, (5) khafī, (6) akhfā.
The nourishment of the nafs is to constantly refrain from sin. The nourishment of the qalb is dhikr. The nourishment of the rūh is to realize the presence of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The nourishment of the sirr is the unravelling of mysteries (e.g. the incident of Mūsā *'alayhis salām* and Khidr *'alayhis salām*). The nourishment of khafī is annihilation (fanā'). The nourishment of akhfā is complete annihilation (fanā' al-fanā') to the extent that the seeker does not even know he is engaged in fanā' – like a person in a deep sleep does not know that he is sleeping, as opposed to a person who is just dozing off. (*Sharī'at Wa Tasawwuf*)

Hadrat Wālā replied: "As long as there is no proof to the contrary, the obvious and overwhelming feeling and emotion will be taken into consideration. If the heart wants to do its utmost in treating this condition, then do something which is not against the Sharīʿah, but at the same time it is against the norm and scorned by society."

42. Identifying Controllable And Uncontrollable Sins

A student who is under training wrote about his worries over certain incidents, complained about evil glances, requested for Hadrat Wālā's prayers and for an easy way of rectification. He added: "I have such an intense desire to look at everything of beauty that despite lowering my gaze, it rises up to look. As per Hadrat Wālā's instruction, I think about punishment, Hell, etc. but I feel so compelled that it seems very difficult to restrain myself. I feel as though someone is grasping the heart from within and prompting it. I am feeling very compelled by this evil."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "I have read every word of yours. A person is rewarded for uncontrollable calamities. I am also praying for their removal. However, there is neither reward for controllable sins nor can I pray for them because their removal is the action of the person himself. As an example, a prayer for this will be similar to saying: 'O Allāh! Such and such person has started eating such and such type of food. He must give up eating it and eat something else.' Such a prayer has no meaning. However, I can pray for inspiration, and that will only be possible if the doer gathers all the means. The greatest of the means are determination and courage. As for the excuse which you wrote in the underlined words, it is absolutely wrong. Just think: If at the time when your self is imposing on you to lift your gaze and look, and one of your elders is present and looking at how you are lifting your gaze, will you be able to commit such a shameless act? If you can, then you are untreatable. If you cannot, it shows that your gaze did not lift on its own, you are not compelled, it is not difficult for you to restrain yourself, nor is anyone prompting you. You are personally doing everything by yourself, and you are able to do the opposite as well. Your excuse is as lame as the prattling of a poet who said:

> I had lost control of myself when I kissed her. Pardon me my mistake. O sir! It was the fault of my restless heart and not my fault.

43. Remorse Over Unpunctuality On Spiritual Practices

A seeker who was a teacher expressed his intense remorse over his unpunctuality on spiritual practices because of his many teaching obligations. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Remorse is to a certain extent an alternative to punctuality when the unpunctuality is based on a valid reason."

44. Wishing For Unnecessary Items

A seeker wrote: Whenever I see a nice item by someone I think to myself: "It would be very good if I also owned such an item." I then make an effort to acquire it. I do not desire the removal of the item from the person who owns it, but merely to own it as well. This shows that I am greedy for this world. Kindly provide a treatment if my thoughts are correct.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You do not have an illness but there is a possibility of it conveying you to an illness. The treatment for it is that the moment you desire the item, you must make a firm intention that if you acquire such an item, you will immediately give it away as a gift especially to the person who has such an item from before, and if you are not so informal with him, you will give it to someone else. And if the item happened to be of use to you, then you will give its value to the poor. You must think to yourself: I will continue doing this for as long as my wish does not end. I am also praying for you."

The person wrote back and said that he benefited tremendously from this treatment and such thoughts do not cross his mind at all. If it does cross his mind occasionally, he thinks to himself that he will give it to a poor person, and his wish disappears completely. Hadrat Wālā congratulated him on this.

45. The Importance Of Deeds

A seeker wrote: Before and after performing salāh, dhikr, etc. the thought comes to my mind that it is useless for me to bear so many difficulties because I can never become a pious and righteous personality. As for the injunctions, there is no need

to bother too much about them because salvation is dependent on [Allāh's] mercy…

Hadrat Wālā replied: "One treatment is that you must think to yourself that good deeds are not solely for forgiveness. Rather, they are the rights of the Master over the slave, and forgiveness is a completely separate blessing.

46. The Desire For Excellence

A seeker described his condition, the essence of which is that he has this intense desire to have the best of this world and of Dīn, and that he must surpass everyone in every field.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You must be conscious of the worldly thing for which you have a desire so that you become aware of its insignificance and worthlessness. If it is detrimental to your Dīn as well, you must be conscious of its evil consequences. By resorting to this meditation repeatedly, your desire will wane. But if it is for a Dīnī matter, then such a desire is praiseworthy. There is no need to treat it. However, the condition is that you must not desire the removal of the bounty from the person who has it, or else it will amount to jealousy which is unlawful. If – Allāh forbid – you experience this, you must ask a separate question. I am praying for a balance in your desires."

47. A Condition For Dīnī Benefit

A khalīfah wrote: I have a lot of shyness and modesty in my temperament. My heart becomes quite disturbed by the respect and consideration which people accord to me. Through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, a few people of a certain village benefited tremendously as regards Dīn. They send repeated requests to me to go to them. I feel quite ashamed to go so I excuse myself, but they do not accept my excuses. I will do whatever Hadrat Wālā advises in this regard.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You must continue going for as long as you feel shy. Stop going once your shyness disappears. When you feel shy again, you must start going to them again. Continue in this way."

48. Every Thought Is Not Ostentation

A seeker wrote: When I relate to anyone something which I read in Hadrat Wālā's *Mawāʿiz*, I feel some sort of ostentation. I then

think to myself that what I am saying is in contradiction to my actions and that I am not qualified to lecture the person.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Every thought does not entail ostentation. Rather it refers to the thought whose basis is obtaining the approval of the creation by using Dīn as the means. This is a matter which is within one's control. When there is no such intention, it is certainly not ostentation even though it may be an assumption of ostentation. Assumption of ostentation is actually a whispering of ostentation for which one is not taken to task. A good deed must not be discarded for such an assumption."

Another seeker wrote with reference to ostentation: Sometimes I am occupied in a good deed when my eyes suddenly fall on someone. In most of these cases, I think to myself that I must fulfil that deed in a much better way. I am certain that this is ostentation, but when I think to myself that a person is worthless when he does something for show, I direct my intention solely to Allāh *taʿālā*. Will the ostentation remain if I redirect my attention to Allāh *taʿālā* in this manner?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "My personal inclination in this regard is that mere correction of intention is not enough because this correction is not the essential objective according to this person. His objective is to beautify a deed for the creation while the correction of the intention is the tool for this beautification. In this way, he feels he will be saved from any taint of ostentation while the objective of his self is also achieved. Therefore, the sincerity which is used for the acquisition of ostentation is ostentation in itself because it is the prelude to ostentation. In such a case, the only way to safeguard one's self from ostentation is that after perceiving this fear [of ostentation], he must not alter his deed in any way and keep his intention pure at the same time. I do not know what the other spiritual doctors have to say in this regard. Even if it is different from what I said, I remain on my opinion. When it comes to personal inclinations, the independent judgement of one is not a proof against the other."

Similarly, another seeker wrote: In the course of my sickness I have to perform salāh at home. The devotion which I used to have when performing salāh in the musjid was not found in my salāh at home. Moreover, my rakʿats in the musjid used to be long when compared to those at home. I am now thinking that

the extra devotion in my salāh at the musjid could well be on account of ostentation.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "That is not the case. Instead, there are several factors which are found in combination in a musjid which are not found in one's house."

49. Smiling While In Fear

Hadrat Wālā wrote in reply to one objection: "A natural smile can form even while in fear. This is similar to natural hunger, thirst and sleepiness when one is overcome by fear."

50. Acting On Thoughts

Hadrat Wālā replied to the conditions of a particular seeker: "If an inspiration is in line with the Sharīʿah, it can be acted on if it is done with the intention of practising on the Sharīʿah, and not with the intention of acting on the inspiration. Acting on thoughts is most dangerous for novices."

51. Evil Thoughts

On the request of a seeker, Hadrat Wālā wrote the following treatment for evil thoughts: "When such an evil thought enters the heart, sit down aloof from everyone and think to yourself: 'Allāh *taʿālā* prohibited us from evil thoughts. I have therefore committed a sin. There is the possibility of punishment for committing a sin. O my self! How are you going to bear Allāh's punishment?' After thinking in this way, repent and pray to Allāh *taʿālā* by saying: 'O Allāh! Cleanse my heart.' Also pray for the person about whom you had evil thoughts. Say: 'O Allāh! Confer him with bounties in both worlds.' Do this three times in the day and night. If you still experience the effect of evil thoughts, repeat the procedure for a second and third day. If the effect still remains, go up to the person and say: 'I had evil thoughts about you without any real reason. I ask you to pardon me and to pray that these evil thoughts are removed.'"

52. Ups And Downs In Spiritual Conditions

A seeker complained about a decrease in his spiritual condition. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Such increases and decreases are essential and normal. A condition cannot remain constant. There can be continuity in actions but not in conditions. Such a change is not harmful. Rather, there are wisdoms behind it. They are witnessed by the people on the path themselves. For

example, more enjoyment in the presence of Allāh *taʿālā* after having committed the sin of backbiting, humbleness and remorse overtaking a person after backbiting, observing one's own incapability, and so on."

53. Concentration In Salāh

On the request of a seeker, Hadrat Wālā wrote the following procedure to acquire concentration in salāh: "Direct your attention to one side when you are in salāh. This is the form which it should take: When you are in the standing position, do not think about the bowing posture which is to follow. When you are bowing, do not think about the short standing posture which is to follow, apply the same rule for each of the postures. Consider each posture to be the objective when you are in each of them. Remain focused in this way. If you continue this until the end of the salāh, you will experience concentration which you never experienced even when engaged in dhikr. There is concentration in dhikr but there is always the apprehension that someone will come, disturb you and remove your concentration. Or, you yourself may stop the dhikr and become occupied with some other task. On the contrary, when you are in salāh, you are safe with the belief that as long as you do not complete your salāh, no one can come and divert your attention to him, nor can you yourself do something on your own. What I just wrote came into my heart in the fard of zuhr salāh, I experienced it in that salāh and in the Sunnah salāh after it. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*."

54. Futile Talk

A seeker requested a treatment for futile talk.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Is the futile talk controllable or uncontrollable?"

The seeker wrote back: "I have fully realized that it is controllable and not only this, but all orders and prohibitions are within one's control. However, it will be a great favour on Hadrat's part if he teaches me something which would make it easier for me."

Hadrat Wālā: "For what thing are you going to ask ease and what will you say about the following Hadīth: 'Paradise is surrounded by hardships'?"

55. How To Realize One's Objective

Hadrat Wālā replied to a seeker who had expressed his worthlessness in a letter: "The objective is to see and witness one's objective, and the way to realize it is to strive. But as long as there is a deficiency in it, the prelude to witnessing the objective is witnessing the absence of striving. Once a person realizes he is not striving, he will – Allāh willing – be inspired to strive. He then realizes his objective. This is the sequence which has to be followed. Allāh willing, once it is followed, the objective will be realized gradually. However, you have to continue persevering. If you display any shortcoming, you must be observant over your lack of perseverance – Allāh willing – you will not be deprived. I am also praying for you."

56. The Meaning Of Considering One's Self To Be Lower Than Others

A seeker wrote: Hadrat, if a person really possesses certain Allāh-bestowed merits, how can he think to himself that he does not possess them and consider himself to be lower than others?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is permissible for a person to consider himself to be more perfect, but it is not permissible for him to consider himself to be superior in the sense that he considers himself to be accepted in Allāh's court and the other to be rejected. It may well be that he has a certain good deed which is more beloved than the other's, while the person himself has a certain evil trait which is more disliked by Allāh *taʿālā* than all the misdeeds of the other. Or, this may not be the case at present but is going to happen in the future. Being conscious of these two possibilities is a sufficient treatment. Man is not accountable for anything more."

57. Regret Over Missing A Salāh

A seeker wrote: Previously when I used to miss the fajr salāh I used to cry a lot. But now when I miss it, I do not have any remorse. Hadrat Wālā, I perceive a blackness on my heart. Please correct me. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Natural regret is not the objective, rational regret is; and you have it. Therefore, your sorrow over the absence of regret is as rational regret."

58. Concentration In Salāh

A seeker wrote about his difficulties in having concentration in salāh. Hadrat Wālā replied: “Just as it is harmful to keep the self too free, it also becomes vexed by excessive restraint. This much attention in salāh is enough where a person knows a sūrah by heart and is able to read it from memory. There is no need for anything more. If this is accompanied by whisperings, there is no harm whatsoever in them.”

A scholar who was also Hadrat Wālā’s khalīfah asked: Is concentration in salāh negated by intentionally thinking of some other issue related to the Sharīʿah or to intentionally plan a lawful journey while in salāh?

Hadrat Wālā replied: “This is an intricate issue. I will present the rules in this regard. Two Ahādīth are presently before me. One of them is a *marfūʿ* Hadīth in which the following words are mentioned:

صلى ركعتين مقبلا عليهما بقلبه

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *performed two rakʿats of salāh with his heart focussed on them.*

The other is a *mauqūf* Hadīth containing a statement of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in which he says:

إني لأجهز جيشي وأنا في الصلوة

I make preparations for my army while I am in salāh.

If we look at both narrations collectively, we deduce two levels of devotion. One is that when a person is occupied in a certain act of worship, he does not wittingly think of any other act even if the latter is an act of obedience. The second level is that he thinks of the other act of obedience, but both acts are such that the second act of obedience is not intended to be fulfilled through the first one. For example, his purpose of performing salāh is not to have a devoted time wherein he can prepare an army without any disturbance. The essence of devotion is equally found in both, there is no doubt about it. Certain impediments or factors caused a difference. The first level is more perfect, and the second level – if done without a valid reason – is less perfect. If there is a valid reason for it, it will also be perfect – as was the case with Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu*

ʿ*anhu*. The criterion for this is Ijtihād, but this is not completely against devotion in every situation. However, as to whether it is against devotion in salāh or not, this is a natural matter. I am inclined to think that in the case where there is a valid excuse, it is also not against devotion in salāh. If necessary, you can apply your question to the above explanation."

Similarly, another seeker complained about an absence of devotion and humility while leading the people in the tarāwīh salāh. He said: "In each rakʿat I make a firm intention of turning my attention to Allāh *taʿālā* with humility and servitude but once I start reading the Qur'ān, I continue reading until the end of my recitation with this in mind that I must not make any mistake. I become very saddened by this. Please pray for this desire of mine to be fulfilled."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Devotion means tranquillity. Your concern about not forgetting [what you have to read in the tarāwīh salāh] is a motion which is against tranquillity. And two opposites cannot combine. Your concern [about not forgetting] is naturally essential, so devotion in such a condition is generally not possible. Paying particular attention to acquiring it amounts to imposing the impossible on one's self. However, the absence of this devotion is neither harmful nor regrettable because the purpose of devotion – i.e. one must not be focussed on anything which is not the objective – is acquired. Thus, although devotion may not appear to be there in form, its meaning is acquired because your concern is a perfection in obedience which is the objective. Your focus is therefore on the objective. Consequently, some Ahādīth on devotion in salāh contain the words:

لم يحدث فيها نفسه بشيء من الدنيا

As long as he does not occupy himself in salāh with anything of this world.

Other Ahādīth contain the words:

إلا بخير

As long as he only thinks of good things.

An explanation of this can be found in my book, *at-Tasharruf*, in the chapter on salāh. It is worth studying. Yes, the natural dissatisfaction which you are experiencing is similar to

istighfār for cloudiness of the heart (i.e. some sort of distraction).

The above investigation is from among the great favours of Allāh *taʿālā*. It has nothing to do with my personal achievements. It should therefore not be disregarded. I too was experiencing the same concern as yourself. Allāh *taʿālā* exposed the reality to me. Now it is left to one's own courage."

Similarly, a student requested such a treatment whereby focus on Allāh *taʿālā* remains forever. Hadrat Wālā replied: "The focus which is on the level of action is within one's control. The treatment for it is determination and consciousness. As for the focus which is on the level of a spiritual condition, it is acquired automatically through the previously mentioned level."

59. The Sun Of Merits For The Obliteration Of Evils

A seeker wrote many details and subsidiary points on the subject of pride, and then requested: "If there is pride in me, kindly provide a treatment for it." Hadrat Wālā penned a detailed reply. He also gave it a title in line with the questioner's name, viz. *Shams al-Fadā'il li Tams ar-Radhā'il* (the sun of merits for the obliteration of evils). The reply is quoted below:

There are several similar points which could cause confusion. Pride, conceit, authority, ostentation and a sense of shame. Then each of these can be divided into two levels, viz. the reality and the form. This totals ten points. A lengthy discussion could ensue on each of them. However, I will pen a concise account through which any person possessing a slight affinity with the subject will be able to understand each of these levels. He will then be able to apply subsidiary incidents to them. As for the one who does not even possess the necessary affinity, neither will the general principles nor the details suffice him. Rather, when he experiences any incident, it will be necessary for him to present it before a master. If there is a need for clarification, he must provide it to him. He must then accept whatever decision he passes, both in letter and practice.

The essence of pride is that because of a certain worldly or Dīnī excellence, a person wilfully considers himself greater than others, and the latter to be below him. There will be two parts

to this: considering one's self greater than others, looking down on others. So the reality of it is unlawful and a sin. As for its form, it encompasses all parts except one, viz. one's choice. In other words, thoughts of these parts came into his mind unwittingly. There is no sin up to this point. However, if after this he wilfully considers this thought [of superiority] to be good, or, although he did not consider it to be good, he continued with such thoughts, then this will become the reality of pride and it will be a sin. As for the condition of considering others to be below one, this has been brought because if a person really believes in greatness and smallness without scorning others, then it is not pride.

For example, a twenty year old man considers a two year old child to be beneath him in age, a student in a fifth year class considers a student in the first year class to be below him in studies, a wealthy man considers a poor man to be less than him in wealth. However, in all these cases, each one does not look down on the other with scorn, then this is not pride. But if such differences are not factual, then such a belief will be a lie but pride is dissimilar. Although belief in such greatness and smallness is not pride, if it is a cause of differences either in practice or honour, this belief can convey one towards pride. Therefore, in order to stop this from happening, the same treatment which is described for real pride will have to be followed. One of the treatments is a special meditation which has to be renewed and repeated whenever one thinks of such differences in rank. The meditation is as follows:

1. Although I possess this excellence, I did not acquire it by myself. Rather, it was given to me by Allāh *taʿālā*.
2. Furthermore, I did not receive it from Him because I deserved it. Rather it was solely His bestowal and mercy.
3. Even after I received it, I cannot guarantee its continuation. Rather, Allāh *taʿālā* can snatch it away whenever He wills.
4. Although the other person does not possess this excellence at present, it may well be that he receives a greater portion of it than myself in the future and I myself become in need of him for its acquisition.
5. Even if he does not acquire it in the future – as is sometimes envisaged from external means – he may, at

present, possess a certain excellence which is concealed from me but known to others, or concealed from everyone but known to Allāh *taʿālā* alone. Based on this, his collective qualities may be more perfect than my own collective qualities. Even if the perfection of anyone does not come to mind, I ought to bring this possibility in my mind that he may be an accepted servant in Allāh's knowledge while I am not. Or, even if I am accepted, he may be more accepted than myself. What right, then, do I have to scorn him?

6. Assuming he is below me in all matters, then a deficient person enjoys a right over a perfect person, like the right of a sick person over a healthy one, the right of a weak person over a strong one and the right of a poor man over a wealthy man. So I ought to be kind and affectionate towards him. I ought to strive for his perfection. If I do not have the power, determination or the time, I should at least pray for his perfection. After thinking in this way, I must make efforts for his perfection. In this way, a relationship of kindness will develop with him. A natural consequence of striving for the perfection and training for another is the development of love for him. And after love, there is no scorn.
7. If you cannot even do this much, you must occasionally engage him in casual and mannerly discussions, ask him about his well-being and so on. This will develop a bond between the two. Scorn disappears after the realization of such a bond. However, if the person is such that the Sharīʿah requires you to dislike him, then some of the above listed procedures will not be followed. However, some of them can still be included in others, so adopt them.

This entire discussion was on the subject of pride. Self-conceit differs from pride in just one aspect, all the rest are the same as pride. The one aspect is that the person does not consider others to be below him, he only considers himself to be great. The levels related to the reality and the form are the same as for pride, and from the above mentioned prescription, those that are not connected to others will apply here.

From the above-listed five evils, the third is “love for authority, love for name and fame”. The essence of it is that just as a person considers himself to be great, he wants others to consider him in the same way, they must look up to him, obey him and serve him. Since it stems from pride or self conceit, its categories, injunctions, levels and treatments are the same as for pride.

The fourth is ostentation. Its essence is to use knowledge – worldly or Dīnī – as a means to acquire greatness in the eyes of people. The other evils did not contain the condition of “using them as a means”. Ostentation also stems from pride and conceit, therefore its categories, injunctions, levels and treatments are the same.

Sometimes, due to certain peculiar situations, a few new forms come to the fore or new treatments are needed. These can be identified by obtaining the view of one’s mentor.

The last of the five is known as a “sense of shame”. It is a natural retraction which is experienced by the self when a person does something which is contrary to his habit or experiences something contrary to the norm. Due to his extreme caution, a seeker sometimes confuses it with pride although it is not really pride. The criterion to gauge it is to see: A person shies away from or shuns doing a menial or despicable job. We will now have to see whether he retracts in the same way when someone sincerely accords him a very high level of respect and honour. If he responds in the same way, it is a “sense of shame”; if he does not, it is pride.

This is its essence which, because it is uncontrollable, is not blameworthy. The other is its form. It is pride in reality but the self finds some way of explaining to him that it is in fact shame and pacifies him in this way. It is blameworthy because it is controllable. In fact, it is more reprehensible than the other above-listed evils because by looking for a loophole, he made an unlawful quality lawful. This is the worst level of interpolation and deceit. Thus, we see that in the other evils, the reality was blameworthy but not the form, but here it is the opposite, as proven above. Since all eight incidents contain all parts of all the categories, I investigated and discussed all the categories (the seeker had mentioned eight examples of pride in his letter for which he wanted an answer).

Finally, I will describe a lengthy treatment. The previously mentioned treatments were temporary, so their effects cannot be permanent except in rare cases. A novice requires a lengthy period of treatment. The treatment is this: He must opt for informal appearances, ways and habits of simple minded people until humility is firmly embedded in him. However, he must be careful not to adopt the lowest levels of despicability and ignobility which could cause his humility to become well-known.

The same seeker then asked for details about the appearances, ways and habits of simple minded people.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "How can all details in this regard be encompassed!? The gist is to adopt such ways which, while causing some retraction to the self, are not worthy of consideration and attention by others, which could cause one's humility to become well-known.

60. Distress

A seeker wrote: I have one illness: If anyone causes me any hardship and loss, I cannot rest at ease until I exact revenge from that person.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The absence of peace is not a sin, it is merely a distress. Bearing it entails striving and is a cause of reward. Thus, the absence of peace is not harmful but beneficial. As for a treatment for your distress, this is not the job of a teacher of Dīn [like myself], but I will voluntarily write something about it. By bearing it for a few days, it will become your habit and you will not experience such distress in the future."

61. The Purpose Of Love For Friends And Relatives

A seeker wrote: "The relationship which I previously had with my relatives is no longer existent." He expressed his sorrow over this and added: "This appears to be against the Sunnah."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Your entire condition is okay, this Sunnah is not the essential objective. The essential objective is to fulfil their rights, and this you are doing. The disposition of some people is such that if they were to give importance to this Sunnah, they will miss out the actual obligation of having a bond with Allāh *taʿālā*. The condition which you are

experiencing is more beneficial and more sensible for such people."

62. Inability To Bear One's Own Humiliation

A seeker wrote: I do not consider myself greater than anyone, but I cannot tolerate being humiliated in any way. I certainly do not want anyone to respect and honour me, I definitely do not want them to consider me to be great, but at the same time they must not humiliate me in any way. I even feel ashamed to wear dirty clothes because those who look at me may consider me despicable.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is in fact the order of the Sharī'ah. A Hadīth states: 'A believer should not disgrace himself.' This is the way to follow as long as the condition is not overwhelming. If it is overwhelming, it considers humiliation to be more beloved than honour, but this is not within one's control. Do not hope for it if you do not have it. If you have it, do not remove it."

63. Greed For Food

A seeker wrote: I have, since a long time, an intense greed for food and eating excessively. This is considered to be the root of all sins in *Tablīgh Dīn* (name of a book).

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The strong one's in the past used to suffer from this illness [of excessive desire for food]. But nowadays, people's powers have themselves diminished. Thus merely reducing one's food intake is enough. This illness no longer exists."

Similarly, Hadrat Wālā wrote to another seeker: "Eating less is not the objective in itself. The objective is to break one's animalistic powers, whose purpose is to restrain the self from sin. Thus, if abstaining from sins can be acquired without eating less, then there is no need to reduce one's food intake. In fact, in most cases today, eating less causes weakness. This results in other physical and psychological harms. Therefore, it is not good to eat less unnecessarily."

64. The Conditions Of Retraction And Expansion

A seeker, in a lengthy letter, described his conflicting conditions. First he experienced severe unbearable worry and

stress causing him to lose all rest and sleep. This was followed by the joy of good dreams.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The first condition was of retraction and the second of expansion. The stronger the retraction, the more intense the expansion. This is why the spiritual masters state that a person should not become worried by retraction because it is a prelude to expansion. Congratulations! These conditions are experienced by few people. When experiencing these conditions, a person must have light meals, and it is essential for him to eat fortifying foods even if he does not feel like it."

65. Worry Over Fear

A seeker wrote: I become worried over the slightest fears. It seems I do not have the quality of reliance in Allāh *taʿālā*. Kindly provide a treatment for this sin.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is neither a sin nor is it against reliance. The essence of reliance is for a person to turn his gaze away from those who are not the real doers [because the real doer is only Allāh *taʿālā*]. This turning away is doctrinally compulsory. And in practice, it is desirable for a person to abstain from assumed causes provided he is able to bear this. As for the causes which are generally certain or similar to being certain, it is sinful to give them up – except for those experiencing special spiritual conditions because they are permitted to give them up even in the latter case. All this applies to worldly causes. Abandoning Dīnī causes does not entail reliance."

66. The Illness Of Doubts

A seeker wrote: I am habitually in doubt. When I hear an objection from opponents or read something along these lines in a book, I become doubtful. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, it does not cause any difference to my actions, but I do not have the same previous interest in my acts of worship. My heart feels depressed and dark. At the same time, I consider this doubt to be evil and disliked.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Do not look at things which could cause you doubts. As for the statements which fall into your ears unwittingly and cause these doubts to you, there is no need to remove them through any special procedures. If you pay attention to them, your distress will increase and it will become

an illness by itself. So instead of adopting any measures and procedures, you must turn a blind eye to them. No matter how much the whisperings vex you, do not bother in the least. Instead, continue praying and beseeching Allāh *taʿālā*, and consider this to be sufficient. Allāh willing, your mind will become clear very quickly. Once this becomes your habit, your heart will become strong enough to the extent of not being affected by such things. This is a special prescription which, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I received a few days ago. It is a treasure of knowledge. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*."

67. Two Levels Of Miserliness

Hadrat Wālā wrote in response to a question of a seeker: "There are two levels of miserliness: (1) One which is against the demands of the Sharīʿah. This level is sinful. (2) One which is against the demands of integrity. This level is not sinful. Excellence demands that the latter level also not be found in a person. The manner of removing it is to act against its demands. But if one does not have the determination to do this, there is nothing to be worried about."

68. The Cause And Treatment For Heedlessness

A seeker wrote: I had set aside a short time for dhikr but could not remain punctual on even this much. Also, most of the time I end up missing one or two rakʿats of the congregational salāh. When this happens, I make a firm intention of being more cautious in the future. But then, no matter what worldly or Dīnī engagement I am occupied in, I become heedless of leaving it aside and hastening to the congregational salāh.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Physical weakness is the cause. This has a natural effect on your will and determination. To a certain extent, this is not within one's control. However, it is Allāh's favour on you that you are conscious of your weakness. You must remain this way. Allāh willing, through the blessings of your concern, you will reach the aspired and required level. This condition is experienced a lot by weak people both in essence and in obtaining rewards."

69. Futile Talks

A seeker wrote about suffering from the illness of futile talks. He wrote the reason for it: When I am happy or do not have any worry, I become over-excited and speak excessively, leading to

obscenities and backbiting. My excitement does not wane until I resort to obscenities and backbiting.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā wrote the following treatment: The essence of a treatment is to remove the cause of the illness. Since the cause of your illness is over-happiness, the treatment would be to remove that excitement, and to overpower that happiness with its opposite, i.e. worry and sorrow. The thing which can cause the most worry and sorrow is death and the events which will take place after death, viz. what will happen in the grave, on the day of Resurrection, the bridge over Hell and the different types of punishments for different sins. So when you experience this joy, you must make yourself aware of those events. If your awareness in this regard is weak, you must read a book which deals with this subject. It would be best to go into solitude immediately and resort to meditation or reading such a book. This will be an immediate treatment. Thereafter, if due to weakness in your disposition, you are overwhelmed by fear [of the different punishments], you must think of those Ah̲ādīth which contain themes of mercy and hope. In this way, a balance will be realized and the essential joy which is commanded will remain:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذٰلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوْا

Say: By the grace of Allāh and His beneficence – in this, then, they should rejoice.[1]

In this way, the futile and additional portions of rejoicing will disappear. These are the portions which are prohibited:

لَا تَفْرَحْ اِنَّ اللهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِيْنَ

Do not be conceited. Allāh does not like those who are conceited.[2]

70. Whisperings In S̲alāh

A seeker wrote: Although I constantly try to remain focussed in s̲alāh, I am inundated with whisperings.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā replied: “A person is only accountable for what is within his control. What is within his control is that he must

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[1] Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 58.
[2] Sūrah al-Qas̲as̲: 28: 76.

not bring any thought wittingly into his mind. If it comes unintentionally and unwittingly, he must repulse it. An easy way of repulsing it is to turn his attention to something else which is related to worship. This can take many forms.

(1) Turn your attention to Allāh *taʿālā* – this could either be in the form of picturing Him or some sort of attestation, e.g. Allāh *taʿālā* is watching me. (2) Think that the accounting of deeds which is to come later on has already started, I am standing right in front of Allāh *taʿālā* for the reckoning, and I am asked to present a worship which I was asked to carry out. If it was liked, it will be considered in my account. (3) Think to yourself that this is your last and final salāh, your life will probably end after it and you will never be able to perform a salāh again. (4) The Kaʿbah is in front of me, the blessings and manifestations of Allāh are descending on it, and some of them are coming to me. The better my salāh, the more the blessings and manifestations will come to me. (5) Turn your focus to the words which are emanating from your mouth, this is irrespective of whether you think of their meanings or not. An easy way to realize this focus is not to read the words merely from memory but with a special will and intent. (6) Think of a spiritual master or any other similar thing.

The unintentional whisperings will be repulsed when these measures are adopted. In the beginning, as long as you do not practise on the above, these imaginations will disappear and the whisperings will return. The treatment for this is that the moment you realize it, you must renew your focus. Gradually you will find that focus and attention in acts of worship will become firmly embedded. Do not be vexed if there is any delay in this firmness. Rather, continue adopting the above measures because you are not accountable for firmness but for your action. Even if your entire life passes without realizing the firmness, there will be no defect in your objective. There will be no defect whatsoever in your worship, reward and proximity."

71. Backbiting

Hadrat Wālā replied to a seeker as follows: "When you utter anything negative about anyone in an assembly, you must immediately follow it by speaking about his good qualities. After all, he will certainly have certain good qualities."

72. Inconstancy

A seeker complained about an absence of constancy. Hadrat Wālā replied: “The treatment is with its opposite. Initially the opposite is difficult, then it becomes a habit and then becomes firmly embedded. The self dislikes imposition, and this is the secret behind the absence of constancy. If the self can bear the burden of imposition, there can be no reason for inconstancy. This is the treatment for it.”

73. Natural Love For Wealth

A seeker noted some of the effects of love for wealth and asked: Is there any sin or harm in this?

Hadrat Wālā replied: “All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* there is neither any harm in it nor any sin. All that you listed are certainly the effects of love for wealth but it is natural love, and therefore not blameworthy. It is not doctrinal or rational love, both of which are blameworthy. When Persia was conquered and all the booty was laid before Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, he made this prayer: O Allāh! You said:

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ ...الآية (جعل رضي الله عنه المزين هو الله تعالى، وهو أحد وجوه الآية)

The love of desirable things has deluded the people...[1]

Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* made Allāh *taʿālā* one of the beautifiers [of these items], and this is one of the explanations of this verse.

In other words, since You created this love, it is natural. We are not requesting its removal because dispositions do not change. However, we request You to direct this love in Your love, they must become the causes of Your obedience and not obstacles to Your obedience because this will prevent the dispositions from being utilized in their correct places. This is the required balance for such love. (In this way, he also made reference to his own weakness and the wisdom behind the creation of wealth).

Allāh *taʿālā* says in another verse:

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 14.

قُلْ اِنْ كَانَ اٰبَاءَكُمْ وَاَبْنَاءَكُمْ ...إلى قوله تعالى: اَحَبَّ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ (علق الوعيد بالأحبية لا بالحب)

Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your family, the wealth which you have acquired, the business whose closure you fear, and the homes which you love are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger…[1]

Here, Allāh *taʿālā* connects the warning to "more beloved" and not to mere love. However, there are times when the effects of this natural love become absorbed towards certain disasters. This can be remedied as you did. May knowledge and practice be with you. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.

74. Why The Need For A Shaykh And Doctor?

A seeker wrote the following objection: The orders and prohibitions of the Sharīʿah are within one's control, and it is gauged from Hadrat Wālā's writings that the treatment for all ailments is to abstain through one's own will. After having learnt this general principle, does the need for a shaykh and spiritual doctor remain?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "All orders and prohibitions are within one's control. Fulfilling orders and abstaining from prohibitions are also within one's control. However, some errors are committed in them. Sometimes the acquired is assumed to be not acquired, and sometimes the opposite happens.

For example, a person willed humility in his salāh and also acquired its essence, but at the same time, he was inundated by whisperings. This person considers the latter to be in conflict with humility, so he assumed that he did not acquire the humility. Alternatively, in the beginning of his salāh, the whisperings were unwitting but they were drawn towards becoming intentional. Based on his beginning state, he was deceived into thinking that his humility was still present whereas it had actually disappeared.

Sometimes a quality which is not firmly embedded is considered to be firmly embedded. For example, he perceived acceptance of Allāh's will in a few accidents and calamities so he assumed that this quality [of acceptance of Allāh's will] is

[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 24.

now firmly embedded in him. Later he suffered a major calamity and he did not have that acceptance or that required level of acceptance. But he remained in that deception that it is still firmly embedded in him and that his acceptance has neither vanished nor is it weak.

The harm of considering what is not acquired to be acquired is that a person becomes broken-hearted and gives up attention to it. Then it really vanishes. The harm of the opposite [considering the acquired to be not acquired] is that the person pays no attention whatsoever to it and remains deprived.

Considering what is not firmly embedded to be firmly embedded has the same harm of showing no importance to perfecting one's self. Sometimes he makes the mistake of considering the acquired and firmly embedded to have vanished.

Another example: A person combats unlawful lust at a time when the effects of excessive dhikr where still in him. Therefore, the unlawful lust diminished to such an extent that he did not even turn any attention to it. Thereafter the effects of the dhikr waned, causing him to experience a natural inclination – although weak – towards his lust. He thinks to himself that all his efforts and striving went in vain, and that the unlawful lust has returned to him. He lost hope in the programme of rectification and then really became involved in immorality.

These are few examples of mistakes and their harms. If a person has a spiritual bond with someone and has confidence in him, and after informing him of his conditions, the mentor would understand the reality through his insight and experiences. He will inform the person of the pitfalls and the latter will be saved from those harms. Assuming a seeker, due to his intelligence and sound understanding, is able to fathom for himself, but because he is not experienced, he is not at peace. Restlessness and confusion are obstacles to the objective.

This is the fundamental duty of the shaykh, he is not responsible for anything more. However, he, out of his own contribution, renders one more service. In the acquisition of the objective or the prelude to the objective, and also in the removal of an evil or prelude to an evil, the seeker experiences

some hardship. Although repeated effort for its acquisition and the latter's removal, the hardship is eventually turned into ease, the shaykh – out of his own contribution – teaches the seeker certain procedures and methods through which there is no hardship from the very beginning.

This is a concise explanation to make you understand. However, the real need for a shaykh is witnessed when a person commences in the path, continually and strictly informs him of all minute conditions and follows his counsel and words of advice. This total emulation can only be realized when the seeker has full confidence in his shaykh and his bond with him is one of submission. At such a time, the seeker will physically perceive that generally it is not possible to reach one's goal without a shaykh, except in very rare cases. Furthermore, the need for a shaykh differs on the basis of differences in people's intelligence and capabilities. This is why the early peoples had a lesser need for it than what we have.

75. Action Without Firmness

A seeker wrote: I do not have any firmly embedded praiseworthy condition.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Do not pay any attention to firmness. The purpose of firmness is action, while the purpose of action is not firmness. If you continue with your actions without developing firmness, you have achieved your goal."

Similarly, another seeker asked for the manner in which conviction could be acquired. Hadrat Wālā replied: "First you must impose on yourself to practise. Conviction will develop through its blessings. There is no other way."

76. Desires Of The Self

A seeker asked for a treatment for the sins which are caused by desires of the self.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The treatment for it is to diligently study the biographies of the pious and righteous personalities. Go into solitude at certain times and ponder over the warnings and punishments which are mentioned for committing sins. Be conscious of them even when you experience whisperings of sinning. Allāh willing, the demands of the self will disappear. If you experience a slight inclination, combat it with courage and

determination. No method is enough without courage and determination."

77. Anger

Hadrat Wālā prescribed the following treatment for anger for a certain seeker: "Keep the person with whom you are angry away from you or you yourself keep away from him. Occupy yourself in some other task immediately."

Similarly, another seeker wanted to know how he could give up anger. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Make it a point of giving a gift – no matter how small – to the person with whom you are angry."

Hadrat Wālā instructed another seeker to make up for his anger as follows: "If you become unnecessarily and unreasonably angry, you must miss two meals."

Similarly, Hadrat Wālā instructed another seeker to make up for his anger as follows: "When you become angry with a person and your anger subsides, you must clasp his hands in the presence of others, touch his feet, and so on. In fact, you should place his shoes on your head. Your self will come to its senses when you do this a few times."

Note: The highest level of treatment is the last one. But if a person does not have the courage to do that, the other two treatments will – Allāh willing – be sufficient.

78. The Soul Of The Path

A seeker who was a scholar wrote with much remorse: "From all the attendants of Hadrat Wālā, I am probably the only one who, let alone reaching Allāh *taʿālā*, did not even fathom the reality."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* you know what the objective is, viz. the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*. Now two things remain, knowledge of the path and practising on it. The path is only one, i.e. adhering strictly to the external and internal injunctions. Two things are laid down in this path: (1) Dhikr as much as one can, which you have already commenced and which is included in this general principle. (2) Companionship of the people of Allāh *taʿālā* for as long as possible. If there isn't sufficient time for this, the alternative to it is to study and read the books containing the biographies, conditions and statements of the spiritual masters. There are

two obstacles in the path: (1) Sins. (2) Occupation in futile activities. There is one prerequisite for all this to be beneficial, viz. diligently inform the shaykh of one's conditions. After this, it is dependent on one's individual capabilities. Differences in capabilities will decide how quickly or how slowly the objective is realized. I have covered everything."

Victories In The Path

A seeker asked: What is it that has to be obtained from the spiritual masters and how can it be obtained?

Hadrat Wālā replied: "There are some actions which one is instructed to carry out. They are both internal and external. Then there are some actions which one is instructed to abstain from. These are also internal and external. Some rational and practical mistakes are committed in each of these two categories. The spiritual masters of the path listen to the conditions of the seeker, understand the obstacles and then provide a treatment. It is now the responsibility of the seeker to practise on it. In order to help the seeker on his path, the spiritual masters also prescribe certain forms of dhikr. The objective and the path have both been learnt from this explanation."

Clarity Of The Path

A seeker wrote: "I am a novice. I request Hadrat Wālā to tell me what is acquired from the spiritual masters and, accordingly, to teach the path to an ordinary but busy man like me."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The self has certain ailments and the treatments for them are recorded in the books. Physical ailments are also recorded in the books but we still have a need to consult doctors and physicians. In the same way, there is a need for a shaykh – a mentor – for the treatment of spiritual maladies. If you have understood this much, I will show you the different types of ailments and, once you have understood them, I will show you their treatments."

79. Simplification Of The Path

The following was related previously.

A seeker wrote: "I find my condition ruined. There is nothing but perplexity."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The desire to put yourself into difficulty is certainly not its treatment. The path is absolutely clear – do not worry about what is not within your control. Taking courage is within your control. If you err, make up for the past through seeking forgiveness and renew your courage for the future. In addition to courage, adhere to prayer and beseeching Allāh *taʿālā*."

80. Progress In Acts Of Obedience

A seeker requested a form of dhikr or procedure through which he progresses in acts of obedience and it becomes easy for him to abstain from sins.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Acts of obedience and sins are both within one's control, forms of dhikr have nothing to do with them. Thus, the procedure for controllable matters is for one to make use of his control, and nothing else. Yes, there is a need for striving in order to ease one's choice, and the reality of it is to combat the self. A person will gradually acquire ease if he does this all the time. I wrote the essence of the procedure. After that, two things are left for the shaykh to do, viz. (1) diagnosing certain psychological ailments, and (2) prescribing ways of striving which are actually treatments for those ailments.

Another seeker described his conditions and requested rectification. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Do not worry about the things which are out of your control. Rather show determination in carrying out what is within your control. If you display shortcomings in this regard, seek forgiveness, make up for it and pray to Allāh *taʿālā* for inspiration. This is the rectification."

81. Seeking Forgiveness For Unwitting Heedlessness

A seeker experienced the following doubt: When an unwitting whispering enters the heart, it means that I was heedless for the duration of that whispering. So I seek forgiveness each time this happens. The doubt which I am now experiencing is that when heedlessness is unwittingly committed, it is not a sin. Why, then, should I seek forgiveness? And if I do not seek forgiveness, I do not feel at ease.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "A whispering and its essential result – heedlessness – when wittingly committed is not a sin because

one is not taken to task for it. However, it is a deficiency and repugnant in itself. Just as seeking forgiveness can wipe out a sin, it can also undo a deficiency. This is why Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam used to seek forgiveness after cloudiness of the heart, after all it was beneath his level of perfection."

82. Difference Between Reliance And Entrustment

A seeker wanted to know the difference between reliance [on Allāh *taʿālā*] and entrustment [or handing over everything to Allāh *taʿālā*]. H̲ad̲rat Wālā replied: "For some people, reliance means casting aside all assumed plans, while for others it means casting aside impermissible planning and becoming immersed in permissible planning. Entrustment means that if after it there is failure in one's planning or the incident has nothing to do with planning – e.g. calamities which are not in one's control – then we must not make any objections to Allāh *taʿālā*."

Note: In several places of this letter, entrustment was explained by the popular meaning of acceptance. This meaning is not on the basis of reality but its effect [in other words, entrusting all one's affairs to Allāh *taʿālā* leads to acceptance of His decrees]. The reality of entrustment is the highest level of reliance, and acceptance is the effect of this high level. Other spiritual masters also took the meaning of acceptance.

كما في القشيرية: سمعت الأستاذ أبا علي الدقاق يقول: التوكل ثلث درجات، التوكل، ثم التسليم، ثم التفويض. فالمتوكل ليسكن إلى وعده، وصاحب التسليم يكتفي بعلمه، وصاحب التفويض يرضى بحكمه، وسمعته يقول: التوكل بداية، والتسليم أوسطه، والتفويض نهاية.

The above details were not in my mind when I was writing the reply. I am now drawing the attention of the reader to it so that no error is made in this regard.

83. A Second Striving

A seeker wrote: The urge to commit sins had waned for some time, but this urge has returned with full fervour causing me extreme bewilderment.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā replied: "Most of those who follow this path experience this condition. There is no need to fear. Your present fight against your self is called a second striving. Allāh

willing, its effect will be firmly embedded. Occasional light demands which are natural do not negate this firmness. These changes in condition can be understood from the following example: A sort of brightness is noticed in the latter part of the night. It is known as false dawn. A person who does not have knowledge of it rejoices over the departure of darkness. But then that light disappears and darkness pervades once again. Soon thereafter, another brightness appears. It is known as true dawn because it remains, in fact, its light increases."

The same person wrote: "The previous difficulty and restriction which I experienced in curtailing my self is not experienced at present."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is a sign that your urge to return to sinning is weak. Had it been strong, it would have been difficult to combat it – as it had been previously."

He also wrote: "I am astounded at the fact that my self does not oppose me when I have to carry out my different forms of dhikr, yet it urges me towards sin. It is probably a subtle plot, and I do not know what to do about it. I am currently practising on Hadrat Wālā's previous prescriptions."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Follow the same procedure and, Allāh willing, all complaints will be removed. If you experience the same urge again, resort to the same prescription. Do not even try to put a complete end to everything. Some people suffer from flu symptoms throughout the flu season. But the treatment is same – they have to continue taking their medication. It is useless to try to get rid of the flu permanently."

84. Whisperings About The Futility Of Striving

A poverty-stricken seeker described several baseless whisperings and requested a treatment for them. One of his whisperings was: The basis for worldly comfort is not good deeds. In fact, even comfort in the Hereafter is dependent on Allāh's grace. Furthermore, if a person does not take the burden of difficult actions such as tahajjud and so on and confines himself only to the pillars of Islam, then what is wrong with that?

He added: I do not feel any inclination towards praying to Allāh *taʿālā* because I feel that such a long time has passed and yet

my prayers have gone unanswered. Thus, only what Allāh wills, that is what will happen [there is no need to pray]. However, I do compel myself to read *Munājāt Maqbūl*. Similarly, I have been disinclined to dhikr for the past week. I merely fulfil the specified number.

He also asked about his livelihood. Hadrat Wālā replied to all his doubts and misgivings as follows:

"The total and beneficial treatment is for you to believe that your whisperings are evil and to abstain from acting on their demands; they will be repulsed automatically. Even if they do not, this is not harmful because it is a type of striving which, if done, will earn you more rewards. However, if you only want to know why such whisperings are harmful, then briefly, it is enough for you to understand that the purpose of good deeds is comfort in the Hereafter, not in this world. As for Allāh's grace and mercy being the bases for comfort, it does not mean that good deeds have no role whatsoever to play. What it means is that you will receive the comfort through your good deeds, but the extent which you will receive is not because of your deeds, it is the effect of Allāh's grace and mercy. However, if a person does not even do any good deeds, he will be legally deprived of the grace and mercy as well. As for whether you are inclined to carrying out the deeds and feeling like doing them or not, this is not the prerequisite for acceptance. Even if a person does not feel like drinking a medication, he will experience relief when he drinks it. As for prayers [duʿā'] they are certainly accepted but the reality of their acceptance is similar to that of an illness. The reality of the acceptance of a request is like a person requesting a physician to treat him with a laxative and to commence such a treatment immediately. However, the laxative was not suited to his condition, so the physician proceeded with a different course of treatment. No one will say that since the physician did not give the patient a laxative he did not accept his request. In the same way, the essential purpose of duʿā' is to gain the special attention of Allāh *taʿālā*. The aiding path which the servant chose is not the goal, but just one way to the goal – as there are other ways to it as well. Therefore, no matter from which way Allāh *taʿālā* focuses His attention, it is an acceptance of the duʿā' – irrespective of whether it is through the way which the servant envisaged or the way which Allāh *taʿālā* willed. All this applies to acts of obedience and needs. As for the committing of sins which

convey one to the Hell-fire, they are similar to a sick person enjoying the foods and drinks which he was warned against having, and experiences no enjoyment whatsoever when he abides by the physician's instructions. However, the person who knows that enjoyment is not the goal, good health is, he will exercise patience and abide by the physician's instructions. In the same way, the person whose goal is salvation in the Hereafter does not consider worldly comfort to be his goal. As for punishments for sins, some people receive it here, others in the Hereafter. The most appropriate, in fact, obligatory procedure is to remain occupied in acts of obedience as much as possible, abstain from sins, and to consider Allāh's pleasure to be the sole objective irrespective of whether it manifests itself in this world or the next. To read any form of dhikr for increase in livelihood under your present condition will only cause an increase in your whisperings."

85. The Reality Of Pride

A person who did not pledge bay'ah wrote: I have come across many explanations by Hadrat Wālā about the harms of pride and its treatment from Hadrat Wālā's writings and lectures. However, I have not come across or remember coming across anything about the reality of pride.

He also said: If I commit excesses against those who are under me and then ask them to pardon me, I will lose my authority over them.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is possible that I did not write on this subject. If this is correct, the reason could be that its reality is obvious, viz. to consider oneself to be greater than others. There are two levels to it:

(1) An unintentional thought of greatness comes into a person's mind, and to think in this manner unintentionally. This level is subdivided into two further levels: (a) To abstain from acting on the demands of this thought. This too is most certainly not blameworthy. (b) To act on its demands. This is blameworthy and sinful.

(2) To intentionally consider oneself to be great. It is altogether blameworthy even if one does not act on its demands.

The general involvement in the error which you mentioned is correct but there are details with regard to it. The essence of it

is that sometimes one thinks that if we were to ask our subordinates for pardon in clear terms, they will become audacious and become more disobedient. Sometimes a person thinks that the subordinate will feel ashamed. This is a valid excuse if he wishes to continue his relationship with him. In such cases, merely making the subordinate happy could well take the place of seeking his pardon. In some cases, if one does not want to have any relationship with such a person, e.g. by suspending him or he himself leaves the job, then it is necessary to explicitly ask for his pardon. This is because the two excuses [of becoming audacious or causing shame] no longer exist. If you find impediments in seeking his pardon, then I feel that it certainly stems from pride. Although you may not consider yourself to be great, you will be acting on the demands of pride. Although it may not be doctrinal pride, it is certainly pride in action. If anyone does not accept these categories of pride, he has still committed a wrong for which it is obligatory for him to seek pardon. If not asking for pardon does not entail pride, the sin of committing a wrong is still present."

86. Plurality Of Thoughts

A seeker wrote: When I am in salāh or reciting the Qur'ān, I think to myself that I am reciting it to Allāh *taʿālā*. Then my thoughts go towards thinking that Allāh *taʿālā* is the Creator of the letters and He is enabling me to utter them. My thoughts then go one step further and I think that Allāh *taʿālā* is present and watching me. In short, several thoughts of tranquillity pervade me. But because they are several [and I think of them], I do not experience tranquillity. Instead, there is plurality of thoughts in my efforts to acquire tranquillity.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "When several thoughts are experienced for the realization of concentration and focus, their effect is in fact concentration and focus. This is not harmful."

87. Blameworthy Relationships

A seeker, quoting from the writings of Imām Rabbānī Mujaddid Alf Thānī *quddisa sirruhu*, said: If the heart attaches itself to anything apart from Allāh *taʿālā*, it is in fact imprisoned. An indication that the heart is not imprisoned is when it totally disregards everything apart from Allāh *taʿālā* and becomes unaware of everything else to the extent that even if it imposes

on itself to think of them, it does not; and it becomes impossible for the heart to have even a fleeting thought of anyone or anything apart from Allāh *taʿālā*.

When I measure myself against the above standard, I find that I am lacking. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, in the depths of my heart I find nothing but Allāh *taʿālā*, but on its outskirts, I do experience thoughts of others beside Him and also recall them.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Most of those of high rank are sometimes overwhelmed by conditions. Consequently, their zeal has an effect on their explanation of issues. I consider the above tone quite sharp but the message is the same as gauged from the texts. Let me explain the same theme in a simpler way. It is close to the explanation of Hadrat Mujaddid Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and clearer than the well-known theme. The word imprisonment does not refer to general bond because the bond which is overwhelmed is not blameworthy. Instead it refers to a bond which, due to distance or absence, has such an effect on the heart that it makes it restless and it becomes preoccupied in thinking of it and fretting over it. This preoccupation causes a decrease or weakness in acts of obedience. If it does not reach this level, then the mere effect of grief is not an obstacle. Can anyone deny the severe grief of Hadrat Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām*? Can anyone say that his condition came as an obstacle between him and Allāh *taʿālā*?

The same person had written before this: Since quite some time I have been trying to embed the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* so deeply in my heart that I never forget Him even if I try, and the mere thinking of others besides Him becomes impossible.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "I myself do not enjoy such a condition nor do I want it because it would mean that I no longer have a choice of my own; I will be a compelled and constrained person."

The person then wrote the previously quoted question whose reply was given above.

88. Love For Name And Fame

A seeker wrote: I have a love for name and fame. I want people to praise me and speak highly of me. I experience a type of joy and happiness when I am praised. My self feels extremely

offended if anyone speaks ill of me or abstains from praising me.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Every treatment requires striving. In other words, awareness of the evil demand of the self and a practical opposition to that demand. The treatment for this illness is also made up of these two aspects. First of all, you must be conscious of the ills of this evil quality and bear in mind the warnings which have been issued against it. In fact, you must even repeat its ills and warnings verbally. You must address yourself by saying: "There is the danger of such and such punishment against you for committing this evil." Together with this, you must be conscious of your faults and address your self by saying: "If people were to learn of these evils in you, they will despise and scorn you. So consider it a boon that they do not abhor and despise you for expecting them to praise you. The practical treatment is that you must verbally stop the one who praises you and be particular about it. It is not enough to stop him superficially. Together with this, you must accord respect to those whom you despise and look down on, even if you find it difficult to do. Practise on whatever I said for one week and inform me."

Another seeker wrote: Since some time I am finding traces of self-conceit. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Man is only accountable to abstain from acting on the demands of such evil characteristics. As for the demands themselves disappearing or weakening, man is neither accountable for that nor can this be realized easily. Moreover, you are studying so you do not have the time for all this. So confine yourself to what you are accountable for, viz. believe in your heart that you are the worst of all people. Being conscious of your faults will help you to develop this belief. Go to great pains in honouring those whom you consider insignificant, impose on yourself to offer salām to them even if your self is not pleased by it. Displeasure is not within one's control so one is not taken to task for it, but dealings with people are within one's control. Therefore, one can be taken to task for shortcomings in this regard. Allāh willing, the source of evil will become weak if these steps are followed. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone."

89. Acceptance Of Divine Decree

A seeker wrote: Kindly provide a treatment to acquire the quality of acceptance of divine decree, and also its criterion and the extent to which man is accountable for this quality.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The reality of acceptance of divine decree is to abstain from making any objections to divine decree. If there is no feeling of pain at all, the acceptance is natural. If feelings of pain remain, the acceptance is rational. The first is a condition for which man is not accountable. The second is a station for which man is accountable. The treatment for it is to be conscious of Allāh's mercy and wisdom in matters which are against one's nature."

90. Abhor Your Own Evils More Than Those Of Others

A seeker wrote: I consider the matters which are against the Sharīʿah and are found in me to be evil and worthy of abstention. However, I do not find so much of abhorrence for my self as I find when I see others committing acts against the Sharīʿah. I fear pride because of this.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Different level of abhorrence are not signs of pride. Rational abhorrence is the same in both cases, and this is what man is instructed to have. These differences are in natural abhorrence. For example, a person abhors his own faeces but abhors the faeces of others more. These differences stem from love and obviously man loves his own self more than what he loves others. This is the reason why a mother does not recoil from the faeces of her own child as she would from someone else's. This has nothing to do with pride."

91. The Reality Of Nisbat

The following is Hadrat Wālā's reply to a seeker's question on nisbat: "The linguistic meaning of nisbat is affinity and attachment. In Sufism it refers to a servant's special bond with Allāh *taʿālā*, viz. eternal obedience and overwhelming remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*. And Allāh's special bond with His servant, viz. acceptance and pleasure. This is similar to the relationship which exists between an obedient lover and a loyal beloved. Signs that a person is a sāhib-e-nisbat include the following: when a person remains in his company, he becomes inclined towards the Hereafter and disinclined from the world, more religiously-minded people are inclined towards him, and

fewer worldly people are inclined to him. However, special recognition of these signs are experienced less by the masses; the people of the path are more likely to recognize them."

The seeker also asked: Do flagrant sinners and unbelievers enjoy this affinity? Hadrat Wālā replied: "Now that you have learnt the meaning of affinity, it is obvious that a flagrant sinner or unbeliever cannot become a Sāhib-e-nisbat. Some people mistakenly consider special conditions – which are actually the fruits of striving and spiritual exercises – to be affinity. This condition can be found in any person who strives, but it is a definition of the ignoramuses.

92. The Reality Of Honesty And Sincerity

A scholarly seeker asked about the Sharʿī realities of honesty and sincerity, and the treatment and aids for their acquisition. Hadrat Wālā replied: "The intention to carry out an act of obedience and to adopt the level of perfection for it is known as honesty. Abstaining from an act of disobedience while carrying out this act of obedience is known as sincerity. This is dependent on knowing what would convey it to the level of perfection and knowing what that act of disobedience is. Thereafter, only the intention and action remains. And both these are within one's control. The method of acquiring these qualities have been gauged from the above explanation. As for what would aid their acquisition, it is to be conscious of the promises of reward and warnings of punishment, and to meditate over one's intention."

"An example of honesty is to perform salāh in a manner which the Sharīʿah refers to as a perfect salāh. In other words, to perform it while carrying out its external and internal etiquette. The same applies to the level of perfection as shown by the Sharīʿah in all other acts of obedience. An example of sincerity in salāh is that there must be no intention of ostentation. The latter is an act of disobedience. There must be no intention of pleasing others besides Allāh *taʿālā* because it is also an act of disobedience. Other factors which are connected to it are obvious."

93. Jealousy

Hadrat Wālā gave the following reply to a seeker's request for a treatment for jealousy: "Praise the one whom you are jealous of

in a gathering. When he comes before your, honour him. Send gifts periodically to him. This will cause him to love you and you will develop love for him. One is not jealous of one's beloved. This is a general treatment which is easier to carry out and quicker to realize than a specific treatment. As for your request for a treatment for greed, you must ask about it in a separate letter."

94. Acquiring The Reality Of Asceticism

A seeker enquired about the nature of asceticism and an easy way of acquiring it. Hadrat Wālā replied: "The nature of asceticism is to have very little desire for the world. It is acquired by meditating over the fleeting nature of this world and not becoming engrossed in trying to acquire unnecessary things of this world. An easy way of acquiring it is to remain in the company of ascetics and to study the lives of ascetics."

95. The Required Type Of Yearning And Dislike

A seeker complained: I neither have a natural desire for good deeds nor a natural aversion for evil deeds. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Natural desire and aversion are not the objectives. Rational desire and aversion are sufficient and this is what we are ordered to have. Repeated practising on this creates desire and aversion in most cases. And it is not harmful if not acquired."

96. A Quest, Not Union, Is The Objective

A seeker described his conditions and wrote with extreme remorse: Hadrat! For how long will I remain fallen on the path? Convey me to the destination as well. Hadrat Wālā replied: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the effects of firmness are beginning to manifest themselves. I was most pleased by this letter. Allāh willing, the destination will draw nearer with each passing day.

> Do not go towards despair because there are many hopes. Do not go towards darkness because there are many suns.

The spiritual masters state that a quest is required, not reaching one's destination. An explanation of this is that one must not have that demand in his heart that he has to acquire his objective. This too is an obstacle because this demand

creates confusion, and confusion renders one's concentration and handing over of one's affairs to Allāh *taʿālā* upside down. Concentration and handing over of one's affairs to Allāh *taʿālā* are the prerequisites for reaching one's objective. This must be firmly embedded because it is the soul of Sufism. This is from among the special gifts of Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib which very few spiritual masters of our times are endowed with."

97. A Wisdom Behind Certain Conditions

A seeker writes: While I was engaged in dhikr on Tuesday night, I saw the entire musjid brightly illuminated. When I opened my eyes, I found it illuminated in the same way. Hadrat Wālā replied: "One of the wisdoms behind such conditions is so that the seeker may remain energized and it becomes easy for him to remain occupied in the path."

98. Fluctuations In Fear And Hope

A seeker described some of his conditions. One of the points which he made was: In the beginning I had less fear of Allāh *taʿālā* and strong hopes. But now I am experiencing the opposite. In the beginning I had more fear for Hadrat Wālā but now it is the opposite. Why have these changes taken place? This has caused me to have doubts. Please provide a treatment.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Both conditions cause progress and an increase in recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*. However, Allāh's perfections are unlimited and endless. This is why affinity is followed by fear and vice versa. Sometimes an exposition is experienced which results in affinity. It is followed by a manifestation which causes fear. It is followed by another manifestation which results in affinity which is different from the first one. Once a person recognizes the limited and ending nature of man's excellences, he encompasses them. Encompassing causes habit, and habit results in a deficiency whose mark is fear."

99. Dhikr With The Heart And Dhikr With The Tongue

A seeker wrote: My dhikr with the tongue is decreasing while dhikr with the heart is increasing. I am able to easily engage in dhikr with the heart most of the time, even when I am occupied in other tasks. However, it stops when I am occupied in mental

work. I am trying to occupy myself in it even when I am occupied in mental work.

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You will not be able to do this because one cannot direct one's attention to two things at one and the same time. However, there is no harm in not being able to do it. If dhikr with the tongue is difficult at such a time, there is no harm in restricting yourself to dhikr with the heart. If not, you should not restrict yourself to dhikr with the heart. Dhikr with the tongue is also necessary even if it results in a decrease in dhikr with the heart."

100. Joy To The Hearts

A khalīfah wrote a lengthy letter which was filled with describing his incompetence and his lamentation over his regretful conditions. The essence of it was that he was about to depart from this world but could not say with confidence that he fulfilled even one department of Dīn correctly. Now which condition can he rectify [when there are so many and his life has come to an end]? This is especially so with regard to that department which is difficult and most important, viz. perfection of character. He felt that it was a waste of time to even speak about it because he does not even have full knowledge about it, let alone practising on it.

He adds: Sometimes I think to myself that I do not even know if I have īmān in my heart or not. I do not even know what Allāh *taʿālā* has willed for me. If – Allāh forbid, Allāh forbid – His will for me is something negative, what will happen to me? Sometimes I reach the point of thinking that if He did not have any negative will for me, why would I not have inspiration to do good deeds and for rectification? At least one department of Dīn in my life would have been in order. I lose my sleep at night when I think of these things. What will this eventually lead to? At such a time I can do nothing but make this prayer: O Allāh! Do not treat us in a manner which we deserve, but treat us in a manner which is worthy of You.

In short, this entire letter was a long and frightening story of grief and remorse. It ought to be titled "an injury to the hearts". He ended his letter with a request for guidance which would bring tranquillity to him. Hadrat Wālā wrote the following reply which ought to be titled "a joy to the hearts". He wrote:

No one apart from the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* can be completely perfect. Even those who are perfect do not consider themselves to be such. Each one sees his own defects irrespective of whether the defect is factual or attributed. They are also grieved when they see these defects. Their grief is so intense that if it were to fall on us, we would die. It is obligatory to give up expectations of perfection. Yes, it is obligatory to strive for it. It will take the form as experienced by you at present. An example of this is of a sick person who has lost hope of total recovery but does not consider it permissible to give up his concern for health and adopting measures for its acquisition. Salvation, in fact proximity, too is not dependent on perfection. Rather, it is dependent on concern for the promised perfection. And Allāh does not go back on His promise. If one's life ends in this way, it will be a great mercy and bounty. This is the meaning of what Maulānā Rūmī *raẖimahullāh* said:

> Continue digging in this path, do not take a rest for even a single moment so that even in your final moment you will be striving and the kindness of Allāh *taʿālā* may be on you.

Finally, whether you refer to it as an exposition of a condition, concern for your well-being or removal of confusion, I say that I myself am experiencing the same turmoil. If I consider it a blessing – the effect of which is that I cannot say if fear is more or hope – I am forced to take refuge in this prayer which gives me some strength and courage: O Allāh! You be there for me, and make me for You."

The reader must have got an insight to Hadrat Wālā's statements and teachings on the subject of spiritual enlightenment. These were quoted in the appropriate sections of the present chapter. I am making specific reference to the last 100 replies of Hadrat Wālā. It must be clearly witnessed from these that – by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* – Hadrat Wālā laid bare the Sufism which was generally considered to be a mystery and a hidden secret. He brought it into the open and demonstrated that the spiritual treasure whose acquisition had been regarded to be most difficult and was incorrectly believed to be reserved only for the elite, is extremely easy to acquire and is there for everyone – the elite and the masses. He demonstrated that Sufism is not an alien concept. Rather, it is very much in accordance with intellect, natural disposition, extremely easy and very attractive.

In reality, true Islam which is a synonym of absolute Sufism ought to be of that level described above and is in fact on that level. In order to support the above theme, Hadrat Wālā's statement is quoted from *Tarīq Qalandar*. Towards the end of this lecture, he clearly explains the reality of the path, provides a comprehensive procedure for reaching one's objective, and explains – with full confidence – how easy its acquisition is. He says:

I have already explained the Qalandar way. However, it is also necessary to explain the procedure which is to be followed because knowing the reality of a thing is not enough to put it into practice. I am therefore explaining the manner in which the Qalandar way can be acquired. We learnt previously that this is a path which combines love and action. Thus, we will have to learn how to acquire these two. As regards action, I can say that a person must show courage and the action will come into existence. This is the only way. However, the question remains as to how can love be developed? Here, I will give you a prescription which is worth millions of rupees for free. This prescription is made up of several parts. They are all minute points so listen attentively. The first is action. I had mentioned previously that action has the special quality of generating love and has a major influence in creating love. You can try this out

for yourself. Go to a person daily and you will find yourself developing love towards the person. It will be little in the beginning, but gradually it will result in a very strong bond. It is an accepted fact that the more interaction with a person, the more the love. In short, the blessings of good actions is that they create love for Allāh *taʿālā*.

One question comes up at this point: We are doing good deeds since a long time but love does not seem to be developing. The answer to this is that doing good deeds does not only mean to merely do them. Rather, this entails several parts. One part is to do the good deed, the second part is to do it in the prescribed manner, e.g. merely knocking on the ground is not salāh. So a good deed has to be done as instructed and in the manner shown. You will then see how love develops. The third reason why it does not seem to have an effect is that you did the action solely out of habit and not with the intention of increasing your love for Allāh *taʿālā*. You did not make this intention in your heart: O Allāh! I am doing it so that I develop love for You. Now do a good deed with this intention and see what effect it has. Anyway, one part of this prescription is that you must do a good deed with the intention of increasing your love, and remain occupied in this with steadfastness.

The second essential point is that you must take the name of Allāh *taʿālā* with all your heart. In other words, you must also engage in some dhikr. The third and very crucial point is that you must remain in the company of the true lovers of Allāh *taʿālā*. People generally flee from this. First of all there is no inclination to remaining in the company of a pious elder. People just read a few books and they think they have become experts. Have you ever seen a person becoming an expert merely from books!? O brother! It is common sense that you cannot become a carpenter without remaining with one. In fact, if you were to hold a carpenter's axe on your own, you will not hold it as it ought to be held. You will not be able to hold a needle properly without remaining with a tailor. You can never become a calligrapher without sitting with one and observing how a pen has to be held and how a letter is to be formed. In short, you cannot become an expert in any field without remaining in the company of an expert. The companionship of a spiritual master is therefore essential. After that, you get the occasional disciple surpassing his mentor.

However, in the beginning, there is no alternative to remaining in the company of a spiritual master. But nowadays no one seems to understand the need for this. A person happens to go to a mentor by chance and is immediately reprimanded. He now becomes terrified and feels he has trapped himself in a calamity. He thinks to himself: "I came here considering him to be a pious elder. But he started off by treating me contemptuously. What kind of elder is he? What kind of Allāh's man is he? An example of this is similar to a person who has a stomach ailment. He goes to a doctor and says: "I used to eat sweetmeats in my house. So you must prescribe sweetmeats for me." Look at the stupidity! Whereas, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, you are also having diarrhoea. Your stomach is not right and your digestion is not good. Such is your condition, yet you are asking the doctor to prescribe sweetmeats. Will the doctor ever accommodate this? Based on your condition, he prescribed a bitter purgative. But you refused to drink it. So he took a spoon and forced the medicine into your mouth. But you forced yourself to vomit and took out everything from your stomach. You are vomiting and proudly exclaiming that you eat sweetmeats in your house. I do not know what stupid medicine the doctor gave me. If only a well-wisher were to say to you: "O you foolish fellow! What do you know? The one who is giving you this bitter purgative is not your enemy, rather he is preparing your system to be able to eat sweetmeats. Your stomach cannot tolerate sweetmeats at present. Eating sweetmeats in your present condition is causing your diarrhoea.

So I say to you: Rectification can only be realized through rectification. Since you have come to a shaykh for rectification, you will have to tolerate his strictness and insults. If you cannot tolerate all this, you should not even request rectification from him. Brother! Rectification will only be carried out through rectification. If you go there with an abscess you will have to succumb to a lancet. The lancet is inevitable.

> You began to flee from love with just a single injury.
> You know nothing apart from just the name of love.

You only know about love in name. You fled from there when you suffered just one injury. Whereas, the etiquette there is:

> If you are going to get angry over every injury, how will you be cleansed if you do not agree to a bit of rubbing?

If this is how you are going to respond, then I say to you: A mere waẕīfah (form of dhikr or spiritual practice) for rectification will not suffice. I take an oath in Allāh's name, I take an oath in Allāh's name, I take an oath in Allāh's name and say that rectification can never be achieved from those mentors who merely dish out waẕīfahs. Rectification can only be achieved when the ways of rectification are followed. So go to the true lovers of Allāh *taʿālā* and pay heed to what they say. Your heart will be illuminated within a few days. By Allāh, you will be protected in such a manner that even an entire kingdom will be of no value and significance to you. Ḫaḏrat Ḫāfiẕ *raḫimahullāh* says:

> When Ḫāfiẕ obliterated himself, he did not consider the kingdom of kings to equal a grain of barley.

Brother, I do not have any means stronger than an oath to convince you. Brother, I take an oath again and say that the person who acquires Allāh's love through this path will never fear death, pleurisy, pneumonia, fever, drought, plague and any other worry. He will become as if he is in Paradise. Yes, if he does experience worry, it will be after thinking: Is Allāh displeased with me? How am I in His sight? I do not know whether He is pleased with me or displeased. There will be no other worry. But this worry is most enjoyable and thousands of happiness can be sacrificed for it. If someone were to say to him: "Come let us make an exchange. Give me this one worry of yours and I will give you all my happiness in exchange", he will refuse. So brother, you will get this treasure by remaining with the people of Allāh *taʿālā* and following them. Thus, the essence of the path is that you must show courage in doing good deeds, adhere externally and internally to the Sharīʿah, and remain in Allāh's remembrance. Visit the people of Allāh *taʿālā* occasionally, and read the books which they ask you to read in their absence. Yes, these are four things. I guarantee that the one who carries them out will become a manifestation of "Allāh loves them and they love Him". He will certainly become this, he will definitely be included among such people.

Brother, the choice is yours. Try it out and see and experience for yourself. There is no need for you to become a murīd. There

is no need for bayʿah, rather the spirit of bayʿah is of essence, i.e. following and emulating. In short, there is no need for you to become a murīd. All you have to do is start acting according to what the shaykh says to you, and your bond would be established. By Allāh, you will get the same benefit which is to be found in a shaykh/murīd relationship. People are very strange. When you show them what to do, they do not do it. All they want is a display of bayʿah. What is bayʿah today? It has been reduced to a custom and nothing else. Consequently, people are very happy with shaykhs who merely induct murīds without teaching them and showing them what to do. When I induct a murīd and show him what to do, they become angry at me. They assume that the secrets of love which are supposedly known to the fakirs will be shared with the murīds. They think that the moment they become murīds, the shaykh will teach them the secrets of love and they will immediately become the lovers of Allāh *taʿālā*. Take the name of Allāh *taʿālā* and of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and carry out their orders – that is the secret. Ask the shaykh the way of rectification, that is the secret which you ought to ask him. If someone were to ask: "What! Is this what the spiritual path is all about?" We will proclaim in a loud voice: "Yes, this is what it is. You will experience many conditions and states in this path but they are not the objectives." Brother, conditions are merely blooming trees along the path. If you see them, so what? If you do not see them, so what? You will still traverse the path. Seeing the trees and flowers along the way is not a prerequisite of traversing the path.

You will traverse it irrespective of whether you see them or not. The precondition is for you to continue walking. Some people do not see these flowers and trees throughout their lives. By Allāh, the conditions which you consider to be great achievements are merely like rose and jasmine trees on both sides of the path. Will you not traverse the path if you were to lower your gaze and proceed? The path will most certainly be traversed irrespective of whether your eyes fall on the trees and flowers or not.

How sorrowful! Those ignorant Sufis have ruined Sufism. They say: "Divorce your wife for forty days, lock your door, take forty chick peas and eat one daily. You cannot acquire asceticism without all this." I say: "By Allāh, you can acquire asceticism even by wearing two shawls, having pillows and mattresses,

having a kingdom, and eating the most exotic foods. But not at your house. You will get all this in the service of a spiritual master."

Hadrat Farīd ad-Dīn ʿAttār *rahimahullāh* was a very erudite spiritual master. A master like Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* says with regard to him:

> ʿAttār traversed through the entire city with love, while we are still taking the first turn of the alley.

The same Hadrat Farīd ad-Dīn ʿAttār *rahimahullāh* says:

> O heart! If you really want to undertake this journey, you will have to hold on to the guide and never go back.
>
> O Farīd! Become true in your quest so that you may obtain the key to true recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*.
>
> The one who treads the path of love without a companion will spend his entire life without learning a thing about love.

However, the shaykh must be a spiritual master. The mark of a spiritual master is that he adheres totally to the Sharīʿah, is free from innovation and polytheism, does not commit any act of ignorance, the effect of sitting in his company is that love for this world decreases while love for Allāh *taʿālā* increases, when you describe your spiritual illness to him he listens attentively and provides a treatment for it, his treatment proves to be beneficial at every step of the way, following him improves your condition with every passing day. These are the marks of a spiritual master. If you find such a person, he is the most superior and greatest elixir. This is the procedure for developing love and this is how love will be achieved. As for actions, courage and determination are essential for them.

People make one other mistake. Once they have appointed a person as their shaykh, they think he is accountable and responsible for their deeds. This is no fault of the people because it is the very same materialist Sufis who deceived them. These Sufis who have made Sufism into a business have placed a veil over the eyes of the poor ignorant people by saying to them: "You do not have to do anything, we will do everything for you." Now the public expects the same from genuine shaykhs as well. I constantly receive letters wherein people say

to me: “My eyes do not open for tahajjud s̲alāh. Pray that my eyes open.” I reply: “Very well, I will pray for you on one condition. You must pray that I get such legs with which I can reach Calcutta every day, hold you by your hand and wake you up.” Look at their foolishness! If they cannot wake up, what can I do? Brother, make an effort to get up. If there is no way you can wake up then at least perform the rakʿats of tahajjud after the ʿishā s̲alāh. There is a treatment for everything.

Some of them say: “I am unable to complete the prescribed spiritual practices. Focus your attention on me so that I am able to complete them.” They want everything to happen through focus. Here, let me tell you the reality of focus. Brothers! Do you think the focus of an outsider will help if you yourself do not turn your focus and do not show some courage? Everything is dependent on courage and determination. The foolish ones think that everything is in the control of the shaykhs. What can a poor shaykh do!? Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself was extremely desirous of the īmān of Abū T̲ālib but he was not guided. So much so, Allāh *taʿālā* addressed him saying:

اِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِيْ مَنْ اَحْبَبْتَ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ

You cannot guide whom you will. Rather, Allāh guides whomever He wills.[1]

Now look! If Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* could not guide a person through his focus, what can a poor shaykh achieve? You see! You have now learnt the reality of focus.

In short, if anything is to be achieved, it can only be done through work. Yet you want to do nothing, and you want the focus of the shaykh to do everything for you and to reach perfection through it. O brother! Before making such a request to the shaykh, you should at least find out how he acquired the expertise which he has. Brother, it was acquired after turning the millstone. The grain was first crushed and made into flour, water was added to it, it was made into dough, rolled into rotis, placed onto a pan, cooked and then eaten. But you want to do nothing and want your stomach to get filled. You want to find a shaykh who gives you ready made rotis to eat. This will not

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[1] Sūrah al-Qas̲as̲, 28: 56.

happen. Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam himself never fed ready made rotis to anyone, so how can you? Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam, out of his extreme kindness and affection, wanted to feed ready made rotis, but Allāh *taʿālā* did not permit it for Dīnī reasons. So brother! Understand this well. You can only progress if you work for it. This is the only way: work hard, strive, and Allāh *taʿālā* will bless you. If you really want to achieve anything, there is no alternative to working and striving. I proved this under the verse:

يُجَاهِدُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللهِ

They strive in Allāh's cause.

In short, you must refer to and revert to a shaykh who has reached a stage of perfection and possesses the qualities and signs which I listed, but do not insist on bayʿah. If he accepts your request, it is his kindness. But you must not worry about it. Thereafter, you must do whatever he says to you. If he makes you strive and work hard, then strive and work hard. If he engages you in dhikr and other spiritual practices, carry them out. Your main concern must be to obtain the companionship of a spiritual master.

I conclude by saying that those who display shortcomings in the objective are of two types. (1) Those who display shortcomings in actions. They must strengthen their determination and proceed with courage. (2) Those who lack in love [for Allāh]. They must remain in the company of the lovers of Allāh *taʿālā*. Both factors are essential in the path. One is action and the other is love. The first requires determination, the second requires companionship of the lovers of Allāh *taʿālā* and emulating them. The lecture, *T̲arīq Qalandar*, ends here.

SPECIAL WAYS OF RECTIFICATION

As promised, I now present some of Hadrat Wālā's special ways of rectification. This demonstrates his distinguished position in the field of instruction. They have proved to be extremely effective and beneficial because they are based on correct principles and most appropriate to present temperaments. They are worthy of putting into practice by other spiritual masters as well. However, mere imitation will not suffice. Understanding, methodology and affinity are nonetheless essential prerequisites. Hadrat Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* says:

> Every person who reddens his face does not necessarily know how to beautify himself. Every person who holds a looking glass does not necessarily know how to run a kingdom.
>
> There are thousands of mysteries which are finer than hair. Every clean shaven person does not necessarily know the Qalandar way.

I also have to say that I do not intend covering all aspects. This is most difficult, in fact, impossible because there are many of Hadrat Wālā's ways of rectification and training which can neither be described verbally nor by the pen. These can only be ascertained after a lengthy relationship of love and careful observation of incidents. A poet says:

> This attraction, coquetry and gait are not the only beauties. Rather, the beloveds have many qualities which do not even have names.

This is why I will only present some of Hadrat Wālā's specific and practical principles of rectification which are visibly seen today. Allāh willing, I will then conclude this chapter. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. I repeat, covering all aspects is neither my objective nor do I have any specific method of rectification in my mind at present. Rather, I feel I will write on Hadrat Wālā's special principles as they come to mind. However, in order to make it easy for me to recall them and to avoid confusion, I am tabling these five topics under which I will write the appropriate principles. The five topics are:

1. Principles related to bayʿah.

2. Principles related to teaching and training.
3. Principles related to writing and correspondence.
4. Principles related to those who come to visit Hadrat Wālā.
5. Miscellaneous principles.

May Allāh *taʿālā* enable me to compile this splendorous treasure easily and in an excellent manner. May He accept it, make it a treasure for me in the Hereafter, include it among my deeds of lasting merit, and enable Muslims to benefit from it until the day of Resurrection. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless this insignificant compiler with total affinity with Hadrat Wālā, enable him to bear the sciences of Hadrat Wālā which are derived solely from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and enable me to practise on his principles which are in total conformity with the Qur'ān, Hadīth and sound intellect.

I know fully well that a worthless person like myself should not allow such a great prayer to emanate from his insignificant mouth – because an incapable person like myself has no rank and position whatsoever. In fact, when I look at myself, I consider it impossible for such a prayer to be accepted in my favour. However, Allāh *taʿālā* is all-embracing. Even if the original prayer is not answered, I still have hope for reward and blessings in Dīn. It is out of this hope that I took the courage to make this prayer. May Allāh *taʿālā* fulfil my wish. Āmīn.

At the same time, I am not totally despondent of the acceptance of my prayer. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> Do not say: I do not have any contact with the king.
> Nothing is difficult for the pious.

I now commence with Hadrat Wālā's special ways of training and rectification in the order of the topics listed above. May Allāh *taʿālā* help me and enable me to complete it easily and beautifully. Āmīn.

Principles Related To Bay'ah

Correction of beliefs with regard to bay'ah

Nowadays, bayʿah is generally considered to be an essential of the path. Whereas, the essential point is to derive benefit. Hadrat Wālā rectifies this extremist belief through the following practical rectification: When anyone requests him to accept his bayʿah, he asks the person the purpose of bayʿah. He continues

posing questions to the person until he gives the correct answer. The person either understands himself through Hadrat Wālā's questions (which are always posed in such a manner that a person with the slightest bit of affinity will be able to derive the correct answer), or the person acknowledges his inability and asks Hadrat Wālā for the answer. Hadrat Wālā then teaches him the correct objective. He does not tell it to the person on his own from the very beginning because when a person learns of something or is taught it after he was made to think about it himself, then it settles down firmly in his mind and he never forgets it. Based on this benefit, Hadrat Wālā adopts this methodology of teaching throughout the course of rectification.

If a seeker replies to Hadrat Wālā's question by saying that the objective of bayʿah is to gain Allāh's pleasure, he says to him: "This objective is not dependent on bayʿah. Studying and practising on what you learnt is enough for the realization of this objective." If a seeker says that the objective of bayʿah is to develop affinity and a special bond with the shaykh so that his instructions will be more effective and it will be easier to practise on them, Hadrat Wālā asks him: "Is it sufficient for the murīd alone to have affinity with his shaykh or should the shaykh also have affinity with his murīd?" When the person acknowledges that there has to be affinity from both sides, Hadrat Wālā says: "In such a case, mere bayʿah is not sufficient. There is something else which is necessary, e.g. remaining for a few days in the company of one's shaykh, to observe his peculiar temperament and give due consideration to it, to continue corresponding with him, etc. In short, mere bayʿah is not enough for mutual affinity. Rather, a shaykh develops affinity with his murīd more through the latter's ways and conduct."

In short, Hadrat Wālā pays particular attention to rectifying the extremist beliefs of the seekers with regard to bayʿah. Once he is satisfied that his excessive beliefs have been replaced by moderation, he does not even wait for the person to request for bayʿah. Instead, he sometimes fulfils the person's wish himself.

Bay'ah is accepted after a long time

There was a person who had been requesting bayʿah since a long time. Initially, Hadrat Wālā refused flatly, causing the man to lose hope. However, correspondence on a teacher/student

level continued. After some time, the man presented himself personally to Hadrat Wālā. Since he had given up his insistent request for bayʿah, and bearing in mind that he undertook such a lengthy journey despite being a poor man, and that his poverty may not permit him to undertake such a journey again, Hadrat Wālā himself fulfilled his wish.

A seeker is asked to write a promise

There was a seeker whose instruction was given over to one of Hadrat Wālā's deputies. He was desirous of bayʿah since many years and was also very eager to present gifts to Hadrat Wālā. However, due to his lack of understanding, nonchalance and extremist beliefs, he used to constantly vex Hadrat Wālā with his stupidities. Hadrat Wālā eventually felt an extreme need to distance the seeker completely from customary gifts and bayʿah. He therefore instructed him to write a promise that he will never present a gift nor make any request for bayʿah for the rest of his life. Hadrat Wālā then expressed his thoughts to some of his attendants by saying: "He was fully immersed in those matters [gifts and bayʿah]. He will now remain focussed to his task and, Allāh willing, he will benefit tremendously." Hadrat Wālā added: "If I see that he has settled down and become focussed, I myself will accept his bayʿah."

Some people pledge bay'ah after their training

I know of some people who confined themselves to learning the path from Hadrat Wālā for up to ten years. During this entire period they never got the courage to request bayʿah nor did they see any need for it because they had been constantly hearing from Hadrat Wālā that bayʿah was not essential. One day, when they came to meet Hadrat Wālā, the thought of bayʿah suddenly crossed their minds. After consulting their friends they presented their request to Hadrat Wālā. He said: "I always assumed that you had already pledged bayʿah to me. There is no need for bayʿah in such a situation, but if it is your wish, I will accept your bayʿah most happily because the thing which I had been waiting for – i.e. mutual affinity and correctness in beliefs – that, by Allāh's grace, is found. How, then, can I refuse?" Hadrat Wālā accepted their bayʿah and, by Allāh's grace, they are also his khulafā'.

Bay'ah after appointing a person as his khalīfah

Similarly there were some people who continued their training under Hadrat Wālā until he gave them permission to induct their own murīds. That is when they said to him: "Hadrat has not honoured me with my own bayʿah as yet." Subsequently, Hadrat Wālā accepted their bayʿah after having appointed them as his khulafā'.

Mere bay'ah is not enough

Hadrat Wālā constantly impressed on the minds – both by informing his associates and by practical demonstration – that reaching one's objective [Allāh *taʿālā*] is not dependent on bayʿah. Rather, mere training is sufficient to realize one's objective. On the other hand, bayʿah alone is definitely not enough.

The form and the reality of bay'ah

Just yesterday Hadrat Wālā was explaining that the form of bayʿah is like grass growing among a bed of flowers. It certainly creates an attractiveness and the flowers appear more splendorous, but the grass has nothing to do with the growth and flourishing of the flowers. If the grass was not planted among the bed of flowers, if only the flower seeds were planted, the flowers will still sprout with their original qualities and all their splendour. The absence of the grass will not cause any defect in the essential qualities of the flowers.

Some time ago, Hadrat Wālā clearly explained the reality of bayʿah to a seeker. It is quoted verbatim from *Husn al-ʿAzīz* so that all matters related to bayʿah may be presented to the reader. Hadrat Wālā said: "Bayʿah has a form and a reality. Its form is not the objective, its reality is."

The reality of bayʿah is to have full confidence and utter reliance on the one who is instructing you. In other words, the person must be convinced that this person is my well-wisher and whatever advice he gives me will be most beneficial for me. The person must be fully satisfied with him and he must never allow his own opinion to interfere with his mentor's prescription and diagnosis. The relationship must be like it is with an expert physician and benefactor. As for the form of bayʿah, it is not beneficial for the elite right at the beginning. However, it is beneficial for the masses at the very beginning

because it creates an awe and respect in their hearts towards the person. Consequently, they consider his statements to be weighty and feel compelled to act on them.

Bayʿah is beneficial for the elite after some time because one of the effects of bayʿah is that it creates a special bond between both parties. The shaykh realizes that this person is mine, and the murīd realizes that the shaykh is mine – there is no state of uncertainty between them. When a person goes repeatedly to the same doctor, the doctor begins to feel that this is my patient. He will also say to others: "This is my man." The patient also considers the doctor to be his. But if a patient jumps from one doctor to another, none of them will show any affection towards him. Each doctor will feel that he does not have any special bond with me because he comes to me and also goes to such and such doctors.

This benefit is not experienced by the elite at the very beginning. It is only realized when there is total affinity and satisfaction on both sides. When this condition is not realized, it is absolutely useless to pledge or accept bayʿah.

An enjoyable bay'ah

Hadrat Wālā said: "Bayʿah can only be enjoyed when a person first receives training and then pledges bayʿah. When he benefits from his mentor's training, it will develop love for him. Once love develops, the joy which is experienced in the bayʿah can never be experienced in the case where bayʿah took place before the training [and before the development of love]. This can be understood from the following example: One form of marriage is when a father and mother got their child married to whomever they wanted. The bond between the newly weds only developed after the marriage. The other form is that a person incidentally fell in love with another. The two adhered strictly to the limits of chastity [having no contact between themselves], and continued making efforts to get married. After much efforts, severe discomforts, a long wait, many high hopes, intense supplications to Allāh, the two succeeded and got married. There will be a world of difference in the joy that will be experienced in these two marriages.

The wisdom behind delaying bay'ah

Hadrat Wālā explained the wisdom behind delaying bayʿah: "When a seeker has a hope for bayʿah, he endeavours to the

utmost towards his own rectification and developing affinity. Had his request for bayʿah been accepted immediately, he will become unconcerned."

In short, Hadrat Wālā is very concerned about rectifying the incorrect and extremist beliefs which people have about bayʿah. After all, to elevate the rank of something beyond what it actually is, is also a bidʿah.

Bay'ah and training are not combined

Even after setting right a person's beliefs with regard to bayʿah, Hadrat Wālā generally abstained from combining bayʿah and training in the beginning. If he accepted a person's bayʿah, he would hand over the person's training to one of his khulafā'. If he took it upon himself to see to the person's training, he would not accept his bayʿah. This is how he did this: He would ask a student: "Do you want to pledge bayʿah or do you want to study?" He would add: "I do not combine bayʿah with training." If the person requests bayʿah, Hadrat Wālā would conclude that the person lacks understanding. If not, he would have requested the essential objective, viz. training. In such a case, even if he was permitted to study under him, there was a strong possibility of causing harm to Hadrat Wālā. Therefore, after fulfilling the necessary conditions – which, Allāh willing, will be listed later on – Hadrat Wālā delegates the person's training to one of his khulafā' and accepts the person's bayʿah. If the person requests training, it is most likely that he is of sound understanding and that he is in quest of the real objective. The person is therefore given permission to engage in educational correspondence with Hadrat Wālā. But if after a bit of correspondence, it is proven that he was wrong about the person's sound understanding, Hadrat Wālā delegates him to one of his khulafā'. As long as the khalīfah does not attest to the person's capability of being trained by Hadrat Wālā, he would leave him with the khalīfah.

Furthermore, as long as Hadrat Wālā is not fully satisfied after studying the correspondence between his khalīfah and the person, he does not permit him to be trained under him. Hadrat Wālā is extremely fastidious with a very fine temperament. In the case where he permitted the combination of bayʿah with training from the very beginning, the inconsistencies and unprincipled actions of the seekers would cause him immense harm. A relationship which is untenable –

especially after bayʿah – and because the displeasure of the shaykh is a venomous poison for a murīd, Hadrat Wālā's above-described practice stems solely out of concern for the well-being of the seekers and is in total conformity with correct principles. A few details with regard to Hadrat Wālā's system are presented. When a seeker reverts to Hadrat Wālā – whether verbally, via correspondence, by presenting himself or in abstentia – then, apart for certain situations where he is fully satisfied, he presents the seeker with a printed page containing the prerequisites for bayʿah without training, and training without bayʿah. They are:

Prerequisites for bay'ah without training

1. Whatever amount of the Qur'ān was read or memorized must be corrected under an expert in the recitation of the Qur'ān.
2. Seven parts or all the parts of *Bahishtī Zewar*, *Bahishtī Gauhar, Islāh ar-Rusūm* and the notes to *Qasd as-Sabīl* will have to be read personally or heard from someone, and adhered to strictly.
3. My printed lectures will have to be read or listened to all the time.
4. Initial instruction and training will have to be obtained from one of my khulafā' (whom I will appoint or whom the seeker will name and I will approve of). As long as the seeker has not corresponded with my khalīfah twenty five times, he must not ask me to train and teach him directly.

Prerequisites for training without bay'ah

If the seeker does not insist on bayʿah at present, but wants to be trained and taught first, he will have to adhere to the first three prerequisites only. The fourth condition will not apply. Then once a strong affinity is established, there is no objection to requesting for bayʿah.

Note: Bayʿah and training cannot be combined in the beginning. (Ashraf ʿAlī)

A reply to each of the above-mentioned prerequisites are individually asked from the seeker, and Hadrat Wālā would not pass a decision until he is fully satisfied that the seeker fully

understood whatever he wrote. Furthermore, while the seeker is living in the Khānqāh, Hadrat Wālā does not permit him to speak anything about bayʿah or training, nor is he permitted to write anything about it. Instead, he hands over the page containing the prerequisites to the seeker and says: "If you need to write anything about it, you must only do so when you reach your house. I will then reply accordingly."

This procedure was adopted because many newcomers give unprincipled replies which cause Hadrat Wālā immense discomfort. This results in mutual ill-feeling. As for the reason for prohibiting written replies while staying in the Khānqāh, it is because when a person is present in the Khānqāh, he has a natural urge to ask verbally about his written mistakes. This results in the same ill-feeling which Hadrat Wālā wanted to avoid in the first place.

Accepting bay'ah without training

A letter is written to those whose requests for bayʿah without training are to be accepted after the period of correspondence. Hadrat Wālā writes to them: "You must send this letter of mine to such and such khalīfah and commence your training under him. When he sends his letter of training together with this letter of mine, and a request for bayʿah is made, I will accept it." When the person does this, Hadrat Wālā accepts his bayʿah without hesitation. However, this bayʿah is accepted via a letter. He does not permit anyone to undertake a journey to him solely for the sake of bayʿah because this objective can be realized without undertaking a journey. Those who are honoured with bayʿah without training are not permitted any educational correspondence. They can only write for the sake of requesting supplications and enquiring about Hadrat Wālā's well-being. This treatment is for those who desire bayʿah without training.

A clarification: Hadrat Wālā is most pleased by those sound-minded seekers who read the above-mentioned prerequisites and still request training without bayʿah. This is because they gave preference to training – which is the objective – over mere bayʿah. They are given permission for educational correspondence.

A course of action for the unprincipled ones

If, in the course of correspondence, they do not used their brains and intelligence, write down unprincipled things and thereby vex Hadrat Wālā, and he does not expect to develop affinity quickly with them, then for the good of both parties, Hadrat Wālā instructs them to get trained under one of his khulafā'. He adds in his letter: "If you want to know the address of any such khalīfah, I will tell you." When the person asks for it, Hadrat Wālā provides it to him. He does not provide it on his own or if he is not asked. He does this so that the tutor is not disregarded and disrespected. Hadrat Wālā is very particular on this point in all matters. He pays particular attention to the dignity of the path and the objective – they must not be disregarded in any way. As long as he does not see a genuine quest in a seeker, he does not pay any attention to him.

If a person vexes Hadrat Wālā in the course of educational correspondence, he appoints one of his khulafā' to undertake his training. In most cases, the rectification which he has to go through takes the form of strict warnings. If these do not have any effect, the person is prohibited from correspondence. He then seeks pardon either directly or through an intermediary. In most cases, he gets permission to seek an indirect pardon either verbally or by correspondence. This is because many foolish mistakes are made even when seeking pardon. Since there was no intermediary, it causes ill feeling which is even more than what it was previously. However, the intermediary is only permitted to convey a message and not to act as an advocate. It is strictly prohibited to give any counsel to the person or to intercede on his behalf. If an intermediary breaks this rule, he himself is reprimanded. The seeker then has to look for another intermediary. This occurs very rarely because all those who are with Hadrat Wālā are fully aware of all these principles. No one has the courage to act to the contrary.

Seekers who are not expected to abstain from vexing Hadrat Wālā in their correspondence are pardoned by him but on condition that they do not maintain any programme of training under him. However, even in this case, he – out of his concern for their welfare – writes: "It is essential to get yourself reformed and rectified under all conditions. If you ask me for information about another mentor, I will certainly inform you."

If the seeker requests such information, Hadrat Wālā gives it to him. If the seeker expresses his special inclination towards a particular mentor, Hadrat Wālā appoints the same mentor in most cases. If not, he himself appoints someone whom he considers will be best suited to the seeker. When appointing a mentor, Hadrat Wālā sometimes takes into consideration how close the seeker lives from the mentor and other factors as well. If those whom Hadrat Wālā hands over to another mentor because of the harms which they caused him ask him permission to correspond with him solely for the sake of requesting his prayers and enquiring about him, then Hadrat Wālā grants permission. However, he first makes them write a note and signs it, and says: Every time you write to me, you must copy whatever this note contains. Don't add or subtract a word from it. This original note must also be sent on each occasion so that it can be compared with what you copied."

This condition was attached because there were some seekers who, while asking Hadrat Wālā about his well-being and requesting his prayers, added other points to the letter, causing him harm.

The reason for laying down rules

By Allāh's will, whatever Hadrat Wālā did was most regular and principled. At the same time, he used to say this repeatedly: "I am not over enthusiastic about organizational matters. In fact, I am quite terrified by them because I have a liberal temperament. However, where there is a need and no work can be accomplished without proper systems, then I have to be particular about organization and become a supervisor. In fact, where there is such a need, then instead of experiencing hardship and terror from organizational matters, I experience real joy and interest. I did not lay down these rules unnecessarily by thinking of each of them from before hand. Instead, they were developed and formulated gradually according to people's interactions with me. Allāh forbid – do you think I have a needless desire to lay down rules and place restrictions on people? In fact, by Allāh, I feel ashamed to lay down certain rules and regulations and I think to myself: 'What are these useless rules like the courts?' But what else can I do, necessity compels me into laying them down."

The purpose of rules and regulations

"My sole objective in laying down rules and regulations is so that neither am I harmed in any way nor are any person's needs left unfulfilled. Had these rules not been laid down, there would have been much disorganization. I would not have been at rest and people's works would not be fulfilled. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, both wisdoms are being realized. My rules are absolutely easy in themselves. I myself adhere strictly to them and ensure others adhere strictly to them. It is only this strict adherence which frightens people. Whereas – without intending a similarity – the same is the case with the rules of the Sharīʿah. They are absolutely easy in themselves. There are explicit texts which prove their easiness. Allāh *taʿālā* Himself says:

يُرِيْدُ اللهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيْدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ، وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ.

Allāh wills ease for you, He does not want difficulty for you. He did not place any hardship for you in Dīn.[1]

A Hadīth states: "Dīn is easy."

However, adherence to the Sharīʿah is strict and there are serious warnings in the case of non-adherence.

For example, salāh on the basis of its fundamentals and prerequisites is very easy. In the case where a person has valid excuses, even more concessions are provided. However, adherence to it and fulfilling it is implemented with absolute strictness. Abandoning it results in severe warnings and punishments in this world and in the Hereafter. Some Imāms have gone to the extent of issuing a fatwā of a death sentence for the person who casts aside salāh. Others issued a fatwā of permanent imprisonment. All these are punishments in this world. As for the Hereafter, a discarder of salāh is threatened with entry into the Hell-fire with Pharaoh and Hāmān. In short, we can certainly not consider a law to be strict when it is easy in itself while adherence to it is implemented strictly."

Natural affinity and unity in creed are essential

Hadrat Wālā never accepts the bayʿah of a person if he perceives a barrier in his heart towards him. This is

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 185.

irrespective of whether it is because of a difference in temperaments, difference in creed or because the person holds a certain position of authority. As for differences in temperaments, he refuses bayʿah with such people almost every other day. In fact, he would even delegate the person's training and instruction to others. This was explained in detail previously. The reason for this is that Allāh *taʿālā* created Hadrat Wālā with an extremely fine temperament and an intensely sharp perception. His engagement in dhikr and concern increased these qualities even more. Therefore, the slightest insolence on the part of the seekers causes him immense discomfort. However, this only applies to insolence which stems from disregard, inattention and lack of respect for the path. Apart from this, many villagers come to Hadrat Wālā and speak to him in an uncouth and boorish manner. Instead of getting angry at them, he thoroughly enjoys their ways of speech and very often relates theirs stories which are marked by informalities and simplicity. On one hand we see Hadrat Wālā's fine temperament and sharp perception, and on the other side we find people by and large extremely disorganized and unprincipled. It is most probably out of a need for reformation of the masses that Allāh *taʿālā* commissioned such a reformer who is appropriate to his times. This is why we see that in the beginning, he has very little affinity with the seekers. This is the overriding reason for hesitating and delaying in accepting their bayʿah and undertaking their training and instruction. He never accepts it unless he is fully convinced and at ease, and is fully satisfied about mutual affinity.

Each person must go to the one with whom he has affinity

Just in yesterday's assembly he was speaking about his system and saying: "Why should I not scold, reprimand and chase away those who cause me harm because of an absence of affinity? After all, even mosquitoes are smoked and chased away. If they are not chased away in this manner, they will all assemble and vex a person." One of Hadrat Wālā's special associates who was quite informal with him and was also an ʿālim said: "Hadrat, why should they be left to remain evil [by chasing them away]? Why not rectify them and put them right?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Every person cannot rectify every person. Rectification centres around affinity. It is possible for a person to have no affinity with me, but has it with someone

else. Therefore, each person must go to the one with whom he has affinity provided the person to whom he goes is a genuine person."

The different attitudes of the elders

Based on the above, I now quote an old statement of Hadrat Wālā from *Husn al-ʿAzīz*. Hadrat Wālā was speaking about the differences in attitudes of the elders so I asked: "Is piety of different types?" He replied: "Piety in itself is not different, however, natural tendencies which come from birth, e.g. fastidiousness, forbearance, weak forbearance, organization, disorganization, etc. cause differences in the attitudes of the elders."

Hadrat Wālā also said with regard to his style of organization: "This was not the style of your elders and other elders." I replied: "The same can be said about Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* as well. There was no penal law and punishment for drinking alcohol during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. There was only chastisement and reprimand." Why did Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* promulgate a punishment instead of a reprimand? The answer that is given to his situation will be given to my situation as well. That is, there was general peace in the temperaments of people so incidents of this nature were few. A mere reprimand was sufficient; there was no need to promulgate a specific type of punishment. But when temperaments changed later on and incidents of this type increased, a need arose for the promulgation of a punishment. So what [Hadrat ʿUmar] Fārūq did, a Fārūqī[1] did the same."

In short, when Hadrat Wālā delegates some people for a certain period and others permanently to some of his khulafā', he does it because of this very same reason of absence of affinity in temperaments. Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "Matters which are generally considered light are most unacceptable to me. This is because my gaze goes immediately to the causes and effects, e.g. lack of forethought, inattention, absence of a genuine quest, and so on. However, others, due to special temperaments, are not affected in general. Alternatively, they

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[1] Hadrat Wālā was a descendent of Hadrat ʿUmar Fārūq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, this is why he is referring to himself as a Fārūqī.

may be displeased, but since this job is not done elsewhere with as much attention – because the other elders are occupied in other important tasks – it is possible that such incidents are rare over there and occasional incidents of displeasure are accommodated."

The job of a shaykh

It is for the benefit of the seekers to hand them over to others until they are able to observe the rules of etiquette. When Hadrat Wālā reprimanded a few newly-arrived seekers for their ill-mannered ways, they said as a way of an excuse: "Hadrat, we have, after all, come to learn manners and to rectify and reform ourselves. If we have no manners, we request Hadrat to rectify them and to teach us how to behave."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "There are many departments for rectification, how many can I rectify? Tomorrow you will go to the pond and undress yourself and then tell me to teach you how to wash your private parts. It is not my responsibility to rectify every single matter – only those which are beyond your understanding, and which are so intricate that even if you ponder and think over them, you cannot fathom them. These easy and simple points with regard to manners, etiquette, saving yourself from causing harm to others are extremely easy and simple. If a person thinks about them, he will realize and learn them very easily. These matters ought to be learnt at home before coming here. To what extent can I continue teaching these points? If I were to accommodate all this and start teaching these points, I will never get the opportunity to teach the actual objective. All the time will be spent on these side issues."

Refusal to accept bay'ah because of doctrinal differences

The above discussion concerned differences between teacher and student as regards temperaments. As for differences in creed, Hadrat Wālā does not accept bayʿah nor training and rectification until the entire issue is made totally clear. He does this so that there is no ill-feeling or misunderstanding later on. There were several such occasions in the past and are still experienced to this day where bidʿatīs, Ahl al-Hadīth, Ahl al-Qur'ān, and even Qādiyānīs and Hindus reverted to him. Some of them came personally to meet him while others wrote to him. Some of them contacted him to remove doubts about those who

were on the truth, others for the sake of learning the path. However, Hadrat Wālā clearly expressed his creed to them at the very beginning and did not hesitate in the least in expressing the truth to them. If any non-Muslim came to him to learn the path [of Sufism], he would inform him clearly but in a very refined and cultured manner without hurting his feelings in any way that Islam is a prerequisite for it.

An incident concerning a Maulānā

A Maulānā who had pledged bayʿah to an extremist bidʿatī shaykh came to Hadrat Wālā after his own shaykh passed away. He came with the intention of staying in the Khānqāh. After learning all these facts, Hadrat Wālā frankly said to him: "Maulānā! It would have been better had you informed me of all these things via a letter because you will hear something terrifying here: There is a world of difference between our creed and the creed of your previous shaykh. He even went to the extent of labelling me an unbeliever. If you considered him to be a scholar, how can you expect to rectify yourself from a person whom he considered to be an unbeliever? And if you do not consider me to be an unbeliever, you will have to consider him to be misguided. If a person considers a Muslim to be an unbeliever, will he not be misguided? [He will certainly be]. And it will be extremely difficult for you to consider him [your previous shaykh] to be misguided. If you think you can consider me to be partially right and him to be partially right, it will not work in this path. This is why I say that these matters ought to be resolved via correspondence first [before coming here]. You have now fallen into a dilemma because you undertook such a long journey. It will also be difficult for you to go back. If you remain here, how will you benefit from a person regarding whom your own mentor considered to be an unbeliever?...[1]

In short, Hadrat Wālā made clear all matters. He did this solely because the Maulānā wanted to establish a bond of training and instruction with Hadrat Wālā, in which, the slightest barrier will prevent him from reaching his objective. Normally Hadrat Wālā does not utter a single word against a person holding the most deviant of beliefs without any genuine Sharʿī need. He considers it most deplorable and unacceptable to hurt

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[1] Part of an extract from *Husn al-ʿAzīz*, vol. 1.

anyone's feelings unnecessarily. Hadrat Wālā took these precautions because that shaykh was extremely fanatical and extremist, and considered anyone who was opposed to his creed to be an unbeliever. As for those whose thinking was different but beliefs were not so extremist, Hadrat Wālā happily accepted their murīds after their demise and brought them under his training and instruction. They have now come in line with Hadrat Wālā's ways of thinking and continue reaping benefits from him to the extent that some of them have also been appointed as his khulafā'.

The story of an elder's son

The son of a similar shaykh requested Hadrat Wālā to take him under his wing of spiritual training. While taking full consideration to according him utmost respect, Hadrat Wālā drew subtle reference to his creed without declining his service. Hadrat Wālā wrote: "I was most happy to read about your attention towards your rectification. This is in itself a great diagnosis. However, the method which you desire – which is similar to a medical prescription - makes me feel quite ashamed. The latter overwhelms my previously mentioned happiness. What am I [I am nothing] to have the audacity of accepting such a great service. At the same time, I am more ashamed not to lend an ear to what you request. At present, there is a general deficiency in the knowledge, practice, conditions and desired attention among the spiritual masters. There is a possibility of some harm if I were to direct you towards them, and this bond does not permit me to do this. In order to come out and also remove you from this conflict, an in-between approach comes to my mind. You may come and stay in my company for a few days. If you find it beneficial, you may remain here permanently. If not, you may go elsewhere. Before deciding to come and remain in my company, also think about the fact that I have been maligned as regards my beliefs and character. Was salām."

Interaction with Ghayr Muqallids

Hadrat Wālā also accepted moderate and non-radical Ghayr Muqallids under his training if they requested it. In fact, he even inducted some of them as his murīds after seeing their persistence and enthusiasm. His criterion to gauge whether the person was fanatical and extremist or not was that if any of them requested bay'ah or spiritual training, he would first ask

him: “Do you consider the Taqlīd of the Imāms as practised by the entire Muslim nation to be permissible or not?” If he replied that he considered it permissible, Hadrat Wālā would ask him: “What do you think of those who consider it to be unlawful?” If the person responded to the first question by saying that he considers Taqlīd to be unlawful, Hadrat Wālā would say to him: “I myself am a Muqallid. And if you believe that I am committing an unlawful act, how can it be permissible for you to pledge bayʿah to me or to acquire Dīnī benefit from me?”

Just the other day Hadrat Wālā received a letter from a Ahl al-Hadīth brother who wrote: “I am blind, I request you to guide and steer me.” Hadrat Wālā replied: “Do you consider Taqlīd to be permissible or unlawful? If you consider it unlawful while I consider it permissible – in fact, obligatory to a certain extent – then in such a case, according to your belief, I am more blind than you. How can a blind man show the path to another blind person? If you consider Taqlīd to be permissible, what do you think of those who consider it unlawful? We have to decide on this first?”

Even if a seeker is of the Ahl al-Hadīth but does not consider the above-mentioned Taqlīd to be unlawful, does not speak ill of or does not harbour bad thoughts about the jurists and Imāms, then Hadrat Wālā does not refuse to train and instruct him. In fact, he does not even refuse to induct him into the spiritual family. There are several Ahl al-Hadīth brothers who presently have both types of relationships with him. Although some of them gave up their former creed after establishing a bond with Hadrat Wālā and chose to lead their lives within Taqlīd, Hadrat Wālā never indicated to them – neither by reference nor indication – nor advised them to give up their creed. In fact, one such Ahl al-Hadīth brother who had come to the Khānqāh, did not say the āmīn loudly in one of the salāhs[1] which are performed loudly. Hadrat Wālā thought that he probably abstained from saying it loudly out of consideration to where he was. Hadrat Wālā therefore said to the person with whom this brother had come: “He did not say āmīn loudly out of consideration for us. Go and put his mind at rest that there is no one here who would stop him or reprimand him. He can

[1] This refers to saying āmīn loudly when the imām of salāh completes the recitation of Sūrah al-Fātihah.

continue on his creed with full freedom. He must never feel restricted."

When the person was informed, he replied: "No, it is my habit to say āmīn loudly sometimes and softly at other times even when I am at my own place."

Thus we see that Hadrat Wālā was never restrictive on these issues. In fact, he used to say: "If an Ahl al-Hadīth brother does not consider Taqlīd to be unlawful, does not speak ill of the elders and does not harbour evil thoughts about them, well and good. This has been the creed of some of the past scholars. So I too am not restrictive in this regard. Yes, it is another manner about whether our hearts will join completely or not."

Certain deviated people

Some Qādiyānīs and Aryans wanted to clear some of their doubts and misgivings, so they requested permission to stay over. Hadrat Wālā granted them permission, but when he came to know of their evil motives and saw them going out and propagating their beliefs, he expelled them without any consideration and concession.

In short, Hadrat Wālā's approach is exactly as is expected of an erudite scholar. He neither transgresses the bounds, falls short, is neither open-minded in the wrong places, nor unduly restrictive. Instead, there is balance in every matter, and this is the essence of the straight path.

People of authority and influence

We described Hadrat Wālā's approach to bay'ah and spiritual training with people of differing temperaments and creeds and beliefs. Allāh willing, we hope to complete this discussion – which is becoming quite lengthy – by describing his approach and interaction with people of authority and influence. If Hadrat Wālā was not yet fully open with such people due to which he could not apprise of them of certain matters pertaining to their rectification, he would not establish any bond with them. Some Nawābs and even some governors tried their utmost to establish special links with Hadrat Wālā but he excused himself. However, he did this in a very cultured manner while fully upholding the protocol which is expected when dealing with such people. Hadrat Wālā explains the reason for it as follows: "One should not take the responsibility

of training and tutoring a person as long as one does not find one's heart so open that if he is not able to tell him that he is unworthy, he should at least be able to tell him that his action was inappropriate. If one cannot say even this much, no rectification of the person will be realized, and he will not derive any benefit from this relationship."

One of Hadrat Wālā's special associates who was also his khalīfah asked: "Hadrat, if that is the case, how can these people derive any benefit?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "The choice is actually theirs. They must interact in a manner which causes my heart to open fully towards them so that I can say whatever I want to them. It has been experienced that the heart opens up with interaction."

Another statement of Hadrat Wālā just came to mind. He said: "Some dervishes unnecessarily adopt a severe attitude towards rulers and people of authority. However, our Hadrat Hājī Sāhib disapproved of this. Instead, he used to say: "To adopt such an attitude unnecessarily is pride." This is why my practice towards them is neither one of flattery and cajoling, nor one of despising. Instead, I adopt a middle way which also ensures giving consideration to their rank and position. The reason for this is that when they are used to a particular manner of treatment and expect it, then it is necessary to give consideration to it according to necessity. This is done so that their feelings are not hurt. However, if they do something which is unacceptable, especially where there is an indication of despising or scorning people of Dīn, then I give no concession and consideration whatsoever to them."

A reply to the request of a police officer

Some distinguished people and people of authority requested bayʿah from Hadrat Wālā. He penned all matters in this regard in clear and no uncertain terms, but at the same time adopted absolute subtleness, firmness and decorum.

A police officer who was stationed in Thānah Bhawan made an earnest and sincere verbal request for bayʿah. Hadrat Wālā had several points about bayʿah which needed to be attached before the actual acceptance of the bayʿah and wanted to clarify certain matters, so instead of saying anything to him immediately, he said: "Allāh willing, I will write something

down in this regard and send it to you.” Hadrat Wālā then sent the following letter to him.

> You expressed your desire to serve me out of your love for me. Although I am not worthy of it, I do not reject any service from my beloveds. However, since there are no formalities between us, I would like to draw your attention to the following points for your own welfare. In this way, you will be able to come to a decision with insight and all misunderstanding may be removed. I am prepared to accept whatever decision you come to after this.
>
> 1. I am an ordinary “dry” student. I have nothing to do with those matters which are currently considered to be the essentials of Sufism, e.g. mīlād functions, ʿurs, igyārwī, nayāz, fātihah, qawwālī and other similar practices. I prefer keeping my associates on this “dry” system.
>
> 2. I am not a man of expositions, supernatural feats, one who can impose his influence and control over others, nor an ʿāmil. All I do is inform my associates of the injunctions of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.
>
> 3. I do not have any formalities with my associates. I do not conceal my condition. I do not compel anyone to obey my counsel, advice and to practise on matters related to Dīn. I am pleased when a person does good and saddened by a person staying aloof from doing good.
>
> 4. I neither make any demand from anyone nor do I intercede on anyone’s behalf. This is why some people consider me to be a “dry” person. By nature, I do not cause harm to anyone by giving concessions to one over another.
>
> 5. The point which I consider most important for myself and for my friends is that no harm must be caused to anyone, whether physical in the form of hitting and beating, monetary in the form of trampling someone’s rights or taking away something wrongfully, whether it comes to the honour of a person, e.g. despising a person,

backbiting him, or whether it is with regard to the self, e.g. causing apprehension to a person, an interaction which causes ill-feeling and grief. If any of this is committed mistakenly, there must be no hesitation in seeking pardon.

6. I am so particular about the previous point that if I see a person's outward appearance against the Sharīʿah, I will complain about it, while shortcomings with regard to the previous point cause me immense pain and I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to relieve me of them. These six points concern myself. There are some points which concern you, and deserve more attention on your part.

7. If you do anything which displeases another, e.g. in matters of administration, it is possible that although it is not against the Sharīʿah, it will be an occasion for the other party to use it as an opportunity to make objections. He will say that you are following the Sufi way yet you are acting against it. Together with this, he will accuse me of not stopping you from doing what you did.

8. Some people will request me to intercede before you and, as per point number four, I will excuse myself. They will certainly malign me for this, but then they will impose on you by mentioning your relationship with me and then requesting you to fulfil their needs. This will put you in a difficult spot and you will feel constrained. You must come to a decision by pondering over these points carefully. The safest way would be: (1) do not even consider me worthy of it [bayʿah]. If your heart does not accept this, (2) defer your intention for bayʿah for as long as you are stationed in Thānah Bhawan. If you do not accept this as well, (3) pledge the bayʿah in absolute secrecy without anyone coming to know of it. I just thought of two additional points which are written on the next page.

9. Although the rulers do not have any suspicions about me, people of evil intentions like to cause discord. For example, [bearing in mind that you are a police officer], a Muslim benefited legally

from you, or a Muslim was saved from the injustice of a non-Muslim through you. It is possible that a person of evil intentions will – out of his fanaticism – convey this to the leaders in a manner which creates a wrong impression and he will claim that you have contacts with such and such religious personality [me], therefore you did what you did out of your fanaticism towards me.

10. Alternatively, you might forward a Muslim criminal to a magistrate or rescue a Hindu from the injustices of a Muslim. An unintelligent Muslim may make this objection: Although he is aligned to a Sufi, he did not come to the defence of a Muslim, or, he came to the defence of a Hindu. You could experience such impositions and the only way you can avoid them is to consider the three points listed under point number eight.

Allāh forbid, I am not refusing but advising you out of consideration for your wellbeing and after thinking about what consequences your decision could have. A poet says:

"I have handed over my capital to you. You yourself can calculate the profits and losses."

Was salām
9 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1352 A.H./25 February 1934

I [the compiler] say: Glory to Allāh! Look at how Hadrat Wālā clearly explained his creed, and also apprised the police officer of all points which needed clarification in a very subtle manner without causing any ill feeling.

Concessions to the infirm and women

Hadrat Wālā was not too strict in accepting the bayʿah of sick people out of kindness towards them, and to women because they are not decisive in their opinions. However, based on many wisdoms and reasons, he severely detested women coming to Thānah Bhawan solely for the sake of bayʿah. This is because some women miss their salāh while travelling and it also becomes difficult for them to observe purdah/hijāb. Furthermore, crowds of women coming to Thānah Bhawan was also considered unwise. In most cases, Hadrat Wālā would

send women back without accepting their bayʿah by saying to them: “This [bayʿah] could have been accomplished by writing to me. If you still feel you want to pledge bayʿah, you must write to me when you return home. I will reply with whatever is most appropriate.”

Another advantage of sending back these women without accepting their bayʿah is so that people would come to know about Hadrat Wālā’s practice in this regard and it will put an end to their coming.

Women must obtain permission from their mahram

Hadrat Wālā would never accept bayʿah from women unless he received a clear permission from their husbands [in the case of married women] or from the mahram who was in charge of them [e.g. father, brother, uncle] in the case of unmarried women. This precondition had other advantages such as putting an end to women’s free and liberal attitudes. Furthermore if the husband or the one in charge was of a different creed [or had affinity with someone else], it would cause constant fighting between them and the poor woman would become constrained.

Method of bay’ah for women

Hadrat Wālā accepts bayʿah from women from behind a curtain by holding a length of fabric or garment. At the time of accepting bayʿah, he would ensure the woman’s mahram, his own wife or one of his own mahram women were present. He places a lot of emphasis on a curtain between himself and the woman. When he dictates the bayʿah to the woman and takes a promise of carrying out Allāh’s orders and abstaining from His prohibitions, he instructs her thus: “Repeat what I say, but repeat it silently, not aloud.”

Hadrat Wālā gives the same advice to women who speak to him from behind a curtain. When they pledge bayʿah to him, he teaches them the same thing so that respect for the Sufi path may be preserved. Similarly, old women who do not observe purdah with him are asked to sit behind a curtain when pledging bayʿah. Here too the purpose is to preserve the respect for the Sufi path.

Rules for accepting bay'ah while on a journey

Hadrat Wālā abstained from accepting bayʿah while on a journey unless they were special people with whom he already had previous contact or they were women because the latter are not decisive in their opinions. If anyone requested bayʿah, he would refuse because requesting bayʿah and accepting it are both inappropriate while on a journey. The reason for this is that both parties did not get an opportunity to observe each others actual condition. As long as the actual condition of both parties is not known and one is not fully at ease, neither should a murīd pledge bayʿah nor should a shaykh induct a murīd. He used to say: "This is not a transaction involving carrots and radish – where a person offers his money and receives carrots and radish in return."

Hadrat Wālā used to explain another reason for this practice. He used to say that people will learn to become wary of roving materialist Sufis. He used to say that another advantage of not accepting bayʿah unilaterally without any preconditions is that people must not consider bayʿah to be trivial. If they go elsewhere and find that bayʿah is accepted there without any preconditions, it will at least create a hesitance in their hearts and they will not extend their hands for bayʿah without thinking carefully.

Rules for those who are affiliated to someone else

Hadrat Wālā would generally refuse bayʿah from a person who had pledged bayʿah to someone who belonged to a genuine spiritual lineage and the latter shaykh passed away. He says to such a person: "The previous bayʿah with all its blessings is still intact. There is no need to renew your bayʿah. However, I am prepared to teach you the path."

However, since renewal of bayʿah in such a situation is also not against the path, if a person insists despite hearing what was said above and his heart is not pacified without bayʿah, and Hadrat Wālā too is satisfied that the person does not believe in its necessity, then he does not refuse. I myself know of a few persons whose bayʿah was accepted after they persisted.

If a person who had pledged bayʿah to a shaykh holding corrupt beliefs cancelled his previous bayʿah and pledges bayʿah at Hadrat Wālā's hands, he emphasises on him to never utter a single word of disrespect against his previous shaykh.

Hadrat Wālā says to the person: “Even if I speak ill of him, you must never say anything because he was the first one to direct you and place you on this path. He is therefore your benefactor. Although he showed you the wrong way, he instilled in you a desire for the objective [Allāh *taʿālā*]. Ungratefulness is most harmful in this path. This path is nothing but respect. Respect is the essence of this path. Nothing is more harmful than disrespect. In some instances, even sins are not as harmful because sins are connected to the Being who is pure from emotions. On the other hand, disrespect is connected to the shaykh who is a human and can be affected by disrespect. This could prove to be a fatal poison for a murīd.”

The reality of Sufism and duties of the seeker

There was a time when Hadrat Wālā used to give a printed page to those who sought bayʿah. It contained the reality of Sufism, and two lists of actions which had to be carried out and abstained from after entering the spiritual family. However, these lists were not intended to be complete lists. Instead, only those orders and prohibitions were listed which are generally neglected nowadays or which people are generally caught up in. It has been quite some time since copies of this page were printed, distributed and finished. However, it has been included as an addendum in *Qasd as-Sabīl*. It is quoted here verbatim.

The reality of the path

1. Neither are expositions nor supernatural feats necessary.
2. There is no guarantee of pardon on the day of Resurrection.
3. There is no promise of accomplishment of worldly desires, e.g. belief that one’s tasks will be accomplished through amulets, court cases will be won through prayers, there will be increase in sustenance, illnesses will be removed through spiritual healing or the future will be foretold.
4. Direct influence is not essential in the sense that a murīd will be reformed and rectified automatically through the shaykh, he will not even think of sins, acts

of worship will be carried out automatically, the murīd will not have to possess a lot of determination or that his memory will increase in matters concerning knowledge of Dīn and memorizing the Qur'ān.

5. There is no promise of such spiritual conditions where the person experiences joy all the time or at the time of worship, he does not experience any whisperings while occupied in worship, he is able to cry profusely, he becomes so immersed and engrossed that he forgets about his own self.

6. He will not necessarily see special effulgence or hear unseen voices while engaged in dhikr and spiritual practices.

7. It is not essential that he will have wonderful dreams or have genuine inspirations. Instead, the real objective is to please Allāh *taʿālā*, and the means of realizing this is to follow the injunctions of the Sharīʿah in totality.

Some of these injunctions are related to the external self. For example, salāh, fasting, hajj, zakāh, marriage, divorce, fulfilling of rights between husband and wife, oaths, expiation of oaths, buying and selling, court cases, testimony, bequests, distribution of inheritance, greeting, speaking with each other, eating, sleeping, sitting, standing, hospitality to guests and so on. All these are known as ʿilm al-fiqh – the science of jurisprudence.

There are others which are related to the internal self, e.g. love for Allāh *taʿālā*, fear of Allāh *taʿālā*, remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, less love for this world, being pleased by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, absence of greed, presence of heart in worship, carrying out works of Dīn with sincerity, abstaining from scorning anyone, absence of self-conceit, controlling one's anger, and so on. These characteristics are known as sulūk or Sufism. Like the external injunctions, it is compulsory and obligatory to practise on these internal injunctions.

In most cases internal shortcomings cause damage to external actions. For example, a lack of love for Allāh *taʿālā* results in laziness in performing salāh or performing it hastily. Miserliness causes one to lose enthusiasm to pay zakāh or perform hajj. Pride and overpowering of anger results in wronging another person or trampling his rights. Even if a

person is cautious with regard to external actions, as long as the self is not rectified, the caution does not last for more than a few days. The rectification of the self is therefore essential because of these two reasons. However, internal shortcomings and failings are poorly understood. Those that are understood, the method of setting them right are not known thoroughly. And those that are known cannot be practised because of the influence of the self. A qualified shaykh is prescribed for this purpose because he understands these failings, apprises the murīd of them, and also shows him how to treat them. In order to create some capability for the setting right of the self from within and to pave the way for the treatments to work effectively, certain forms of dhikr and spiritual practices are taught. Anyway, dhikr in itself is a form of worship. Finally, a seeker has to do two things: (1) One is essential, and that is to adhere to the external and internal injunctions of the Sharīʿah. (2) The other is desirable, and that is to be punctual and regular with dhikr. This will enable him to carry out injunctions through which he will gain Allāh's pleasure and proximity. Excessive dhikr will earn him even more pleasure and bring him closer to Allāh *taʿālā*. This is the gist and essence of the path and the destination.

The rights of the path

The following will have to be done upon entering the path[1]:

1. All eleven parts of *Bahishtī Zewar* from beginning to end will have to be read or heard word for word.
2. All your life conditions will have to be in line with *Bahishtī Zewar*.
3. If you need to do something and you do not know whether it is lawful or not, you will have to ask the genuine ʿulamāʾ before doing it, and then act according to what they say.
4. Perform all your five salāhs with congregation.[2] If you have a valid Sharʿī excuse, you do not have to perform them with congregation. If you leave it out without a

[1] These rights are incumbent on every Muslim even if he or she has not pledged bayʿah to anyone.
[2] There is no congregation for women.

valid excuse due to your negligence, you must seek forgiveness with remorse.

5. If you have wealth which equals nis̲āb, you must pay zakāh. Rules in this regard can be found in *Bahishtī Zewar.* Similarly, one tenth and one twentieth of the produce of the land will have to be given as zakāh. Rules in this regard must be learnt verbally.

6. You will have to perform h̲ajj if you have the means. Similarly, s̲adaqul fit̲r and qurbānī will have to be fulfilled if you have the means.

7. You will have to fulfil the rights of your wife and children. It is also their Dīnī right to constantly show them the injunctions of the Sharī'ah.

An easy way to implement the above for those who can read is to set aside a time in the morning and evening to read the *Bahishtī Zewar* to one's family members and to explain to them. This must continue until the book is completed from beginning to end. Once it is completed, start reading it again from the beginning. Continue reading the rules and regulations until you are able to remember them thoroughly. As for those who cannot read, they must make it a point of remembering whatever they hear from the 'ulamā' and then conveying it to their family members.

The following acts will have to be given up:

Shaving the beard; trimming it below the length of one fist; having different lengths of hair on the head; wearing trousers, pants or kurtas below the ankles; having the tail of a turban to hang more than half the length of the back; wearing clothes which are dyed with safflower, saffron or any impure dye; wearing silk or silk brocade which is broader than four finger's width or to make boys to wear the same; wearing clothes which are worn by unbelievers; men wearing silver rings which weigh one mithqāl or more, or gold rings [of any weight]; women wearing high-heeled shoes or men's style garments, jewellery which emits a jingling sound, very fine or tight clothing which shows the body shape. To look at a woman or man with an evil eye; to intermingle with women and young boys; for a man or woman to sit near a strange woman or man or to sit in privacy; for them to come in front of each other without any real need – even if it is one's shaykh or relative. If there is no real and

genuine need, it is prohibited to expose one's head, arms, forearms, calves and neck to strange men. It is better to remain dumb in the presence of men. It is most evil and detestable to come before them with attractive clothing and jewellery. Similarly, mutual laughing and joking between strange men and women, speaking more than necessary, etc. should be avoided. Intermingling on occasions of circumcision, ʿaqīqah or weddings must also be avoided. There is no harm in assembling immediate male relatives at the actual time of nikāh. Any other act which smacks of pride, e.g. customary feeding of people must also be given up.

Extravagance and too many formalities with regard to clothing are also included in pride and ostentation. Screaming and crying over the deceased; holding the 10th day, 20th day, 40th day and other similar celebrations; walking behind the funeral procession from long distances; distributing the clothes of the deceased to the poor in a manner which is not in accordance with the Sharīʿah; depriving females from the inheritance; people of authority wronging the poor; making false accusations; making claims to inheritance; consuming the income of mortgages or bribery; taking or displaying photographs; keeping dogs as pets; taking part in fireworks, pigeon racing, cock-fighting and other frivolous activities; listening to music; taking part in ʿurs functions; taking vows in the names of saints; participating in common day igyārwī functions; holding customary maulūd functions; intermingling of men and women on such occasions; cooking sweet dishes on the night of Barā'ah; mourning during the month of Muharram; making it a point of distributing something sweet on the completion of the Qur'ān in Ramadān; going to sorcerers and fortune tellers; backbiting; carrying tales; speaking lies; cheating in business; taking unlawful jobs without compulsion; being treacherous in lawful jobs. For a woman to be foul-mouthed to her husband; spending his wealth without permission; going somewhere without his permission. For memorizers of the Qur'ān to accept something [money, gifts] in exchange for reciting the Qur'ān at a grave or reciting it in the tarāwīh salāh. For ʿulamā' to accept payment for delivering talks or issuing fatāwā; or for them to fall into disputes and arguments. For people who are merely dressed like dervishes to desire having disciples or becoming involved in writing amulets.

This is a short list of dos and don'ts. Details can be found in my other writings.

Bay'ah in all four spiritual families

As per the unique and accepted practice of his shaykh, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, Hadrat Wālā used to admit the seekers into all four spiritual families so that a person will be affiliated to all the elders of the path and derive blessings from all. Furthermore, this will enable him to have confidence in the elders of all four spiritual families and abstain from giving preference to the elders of one lineage over those of the others. It is forbidden to do this because it results in scorning those of the other lineages. This is forbidden and also extremely dangerous. Having bad thoughts about the elders could well result in an evil death for the person. As for deprivation of their blessings, this is certain.

An open heart as regards bay'ah

In addition to all the above rules and preconditions, Hadrat Wālā also gave consideration to his own open heartedness as regards bayʿah. in fact, the acceptance of bayʿah was by and large dependent on the acceptance of his heart. He abstained from accepting bayʿah from seekers if his heart did not testify to their inherent capabilities, spiritual affinity and an attraction of the heart. In fact, such conditions would present themselves in these situations which would cause the person to withdraw himself and the correctness of the testimony of Hadrat Wālā's heart would be established and proven. Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "There are some who, when I merely look at them, my heart spontaneously desires that they must request bayʿah. Consequently, in most cases, when my heart desired this for any person, Allāh *taʿālā* Himself created an urge for bayʿah in his heart. The person would then request bayʿah and I would accept without hesitation."

Details with regard to the testimony of Hadrat Wālā's heart were provided previously. I am therefore sufficing with the above. I now conclude this section on "Principles Related to Bayʿah". If I think of any other principles in this regard later on, then – Allāh willing – I will include them under the section "Miscellaneous Principles".

Teachings are open to all, bay'ah is restricted

From the above points, the reader must have gauged that Hadrat Wālā did not believe in bayʿah just in name. Rather, he insisted on a bayʿah which was accompanied with striving. This is why he never tolerated hastiness in this regard. He says: "Accepting the bayʿah of a person entails adopting him as your son. As long as both parties are not convinced about their mutual affinity and agreement, you cannot adopt a person as your son. After all, this is a life-long relationship. However, when distributing sweetmeats, one does not confine himself to distributing them to his sons only. Rather, they are distributed among all the youngsters. In the same way, my teachings are open to everyone but bayʿah is restricted."

The benefit of adhering to rules and regulations

When old associates commit mistakes, Hadrat Wālā says: "Look! Despite all these precautions, there are so many different types of people who have become murīds. Had I been open [in accepting all and sundry], I do not know what the situation would have been. I would not be satisfied with anyone. By Allāh's grace, despite this there are very few of such people. This is the result of my restrictions. By Allāh's grace, those who are under me, I at least have confidence in them. If not, it would have been difficult to distinguish them. What is the benefit of merely adding to one's numbers? Do you think I want to mobilize an army of murīds? Of what benefit is there in mobilizing them when they will flee from the battlefield at the actual time of battle? In fact, when they flee, they may well cause others in whom I have confidence to flee as well."

Hadrat Wālā also says: "Even if the benefit of this path is not all embracing, it is at least – all thanks are due to Allāh – complete and perfect."

After providing full details about the bayʿah of a newly-arrived seeker, Hadrat Wālā said: "Since I am most appreciative of freedom, I give a full explanation about bayʿah and apprise the seeker that bayʿah has nothing to do with deriving benefit. A relationship of instruction and learning is most certainly enough because the freedom remains – if the person's heart becomes disinclined, he will be absolutely free to leave me. On the other hand, when a person pledges bayʿah, he causes himself to become tied down unnecessarily. If he wishes to go

elsewhere, then [although it is permissible] the prevailing attitude with regard to bayʿah prevents him from leaving."

The importance of bayʿah

A man requested bayʿah. Hadrat Wālā asked: "Where have you come from?" He replied: "I came for a wedding and decided to come here with the intention of pledging bayʿah to you." Hadrat Wālā said: "This is not something which is done by the way with other things. It is proof of disinterest. I will therefore not accept your bayʿah at present. You must make a special trip specifically for this purpose [of bayʿah]. I will speak to you then."

Unintentional offence to one's shaykh

Even unintentional offences to the shaykhs are detrimental. This is why excessive kindness is harmful. The more the kindness, the more people will offend the shaykh by their crude actions and this will cause grief over every small matter. I now explain another issue based on what I just said. I laid it down a few days ago and have been compelled to do it. However, people have not understood my compulsion as yet. You have already learnt that excessive kindness is harmful. Furthermore, you know the principle of:

مقدمة المكروه مكروه، ومقدمة الواجب واجب

A thing which is a cause of evil is also evil. A thing which is the means to an obligation is also obligatory.

Since we learnt that excessive kindness is harmful, the thing which is a cause of excessive kindness has to be given up. Thus, when I accept the bayʿah from a person, I am overcome by excessive kindness. This is why I stopped accepting bayʿah. Although it has something to do with a fatwā which was the fundamental of bayʿah, but people have exceeded the bounds in this regard as well. The essence of bayʿah is that a murīd pledges to obey, while the shaykh pledges kindness and rectification. However, people have exceeded the bounds, causing changes in beliefs and practices.

The changes in beliefs is that as long as they do not pledge bayʿah physically – by placing their hand in the hand of a shaykh – they consider a mere verbal pledge to be insufficient. This is why it is said to them: 'We will teach you and do

everything for your rectification', but they are never prepared to accept this. As though piety is an electric current which will never run from one to another as long as they do not physically pledge bayʿah. If this was the case, our spiritual lineage would have been severed by now because there was a time when the spiritual masters had given up accepting bayʿah in this manner. They did this because in those days, the king used to enjoy obedience from his subjects. If a person were to pledge bayʿah at the hands of another, it would seem to be rebellion against the king and it would be assumed that the shaykh is also seeking kingdom. The spiritual masters of those days – fearing someone might spy them to the kings – gave up the system of physical bayʿah. They sufficed with a verbal agreement and continued teaching and instructing the murīd. Now you see, if bayʿah would not have been possible without this specific physical form, the entire spiritual lineage would have been cut off. If bayʿah [verbal] can be done, why should it be denied and why should a verbal agreement and instruction be considered insufficient? Is it not extremism in beliefs to consider a non-essential to be essential? It certainly is and has to be rectified.

There are two ways of doing this: (1) The physical bayʿah be maintained, and the person be verbally informed that the placing of your hand in the shaykh's hand is an outward bayʿah. The real bayʿah is to do what he says. (2) The physical bayʿah be given up completely. Other elders may continue with it but because I become excessively kind after it, I will opt for the second option. In this way, extremism in beliefs will be rectified and so will its harms.

Abstaining from fighting and arguing

At the time of bayʿah, I prohibit the person from fighting and arguing with anyone. I noticed that when ignorant people start fighting and arguing, they open the doors to abuses being hurled against the pious elders. There can be only two situations: (1) The person will speak in praise of his elders, and I disapprove of this. A person is actually clutching at bones when he goes around speaking in praise of his elders unnecessarily. If a person has a need for a shaykh, he must go on his own and observe the shaykh for himself. What is the need for you to encourage him? (2) The person will speak ill of the pious elders. This is how it starts: People will speak about a

certain issue or ruling in the presence of a murīd. He will say that such and such pious elder has this to say with regard to that ruling. The rest of the people will now hurl abuses at the pious elder. What was the need for this murīd to make mention of his shaykh in the presence of enemies of the shaykh and to open the door for abuses to be hurled at him? In the first place, the murīd had no need whatsoever to go into a fervour to respond. Even if he did, there was no need to attribute the point to his shaykh. He could have confined it to himself. It is most immature to be overcome by fervour yourself and to then attribute it to your shaykh so that whatever is said thereafter is said against the shaykh and not to you.

Principles Related To Teaching And Training

Keeping the seeker subservient

In his programme of teaching and training, Hadrat Wālā was never subservient to the seeker but always kept the latter subservient to him. There is a lot of wisdom and good in this system which is clearly supported by the following verse:

لَوْ يُطِيْعُكُمْ فِيْ كَثِيْرٍ مِّنَ الْاَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ

Were he to follow you in many matters, you would suffer.[1]

Although Hadrat Wālā gave full consideration to his [seeker's] correct feelings, he never acceded to any and every right or wrong request, or replied to any haphazard question according to the seeker's wishes. In fact, he constantly says: "Most of my answers are not in line with the seeker's wishes, but – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – they are totally in accordance with his illness."

Hadrat Wālā's practice in answering a seeker's questions

I say: I witness this all the time and anyone who wishes can examine all incidents and conditions related to this subject that in treating every seeker and replying to his questions (which in the beginning – due to ignorance and lack of affinity with the path – are not only lengthy and detailed, but also contain futilities. Hadrat Wālā says in a very beautiful and subtle manner with reference to them: "I am not distressed by long letters, but those which are futile and useless.") Hadrat

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[1] Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 7.

Wālā always poses factual and straightforward questions and silences the seeker so that he realizes his ignorance. According to Hadrat Wālā, realization of one's ignorance is the most beneficial knowledge. Hadrat Wālā seals off all other avenues and leaves the seeker with no other option. He surrounds him from all sides, places him on the main highway and conveys him to the essential destination. Allāh *taʿālā* has blessed Hadrat Wālā with a unique ability – despite many lengthy and detailed letters containing various intermixed and confusing themes, he is able to fathom the reply to it with a single glance and his pen flows with a concise answer or poses questions which shifts the seeker away from non-objectives. As for the seeker's longwinded details and unnecessary themes, Hadrat Wālā renders them to smithereens like a small tremor which reduces huge mountains to dust.

Foolish people are distressed by Hadrat Wālā's questions

People who lack understanding are distressed by Hadrat Wālā's questions whereas they are not questions in themselves. They are actually answers because if a person has a little sound understanding, he can easily extract answers from those very questions. Hadrat Wālā's questions demand that the seeker continues writing to Hadrat Wālā on issues concerning his rectification. This is most essential. While on the subject of getting distressed by his questions, I recall an incident which occurred just yesterday. A person posed a very long and detailed question to Hadrat Wālā about a matter which was absolutely unnecessary. As per his norm, he wrote: "Is there any Dīnī objective dependent on this?" The person wrote back: "My objective is a Dīnī matter and it is solely to establish belief in the reality." Hadrat Wālā wrote the same answer: "Is this matter from among the essential beliefs?" The person felt offended and wrote back: "I posed the same question two times, but instead of providing an answer, you merely looked at my letter superficially and are now posing a question to me. I hope you will now give me a correct answer."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "My answer is the same – which I consider to be correct and you consider to be incorrect. It will be better if you pose your question to a scholar who is an expert in his knowledge, and subservient to you in his practice and actions."

After reading these questions and answers before his assembly, Hadrat Wālā addressed all who were present and said: "I do not

even feel offended by the statements of such foolish people. I consider it to be like a kick from an animal. If a person's animal kicks him, he will certainly be injured but he will not be offended because he knows that this is an animal, it has no intelligence, and that is why it kicked him. In fact, I take an oath in Allāh's name and say that I rejoice when such people feel offended because I am now freed from such foolish people. Had they continued their bond with me, they would have vexed me for the rest of my life."

A reply to a untimely question of a seeker

Coincidentally, another incident which supports Hadrat Wālā's practice of not being subservient to a seeker in matters concerning rectification and instead, makes him subservient to himself, took place yesterday. A seeker wrote to Hadrat Wālā with the following request: "I seek permission to engage in the twelve tasbīhs after I complete my tahajjud salāh." Hadrat Wālā replied: "If a person were to ask a doctor to permit him to take *khamīrah gā'ū zabān* which is taken by people, what reply will the doctor give?"

Look! It appears to be a beautiful request and who will normally refuse such a request? An immediate permission would have been given by other shaykhs. However, Hadrat Wālā is very particular about every matter being done at the right time and place, and he conveys a seeker through the levels of Sufism in a very sequenced manner. In this way, the seeker is protected from every type of misguidance and is able to traverse the path easily. He always says: "The first duty of a shaykh is to teach the reality of the path to the seeker and to place him on the right path so that all that is left for him to do is to tread it, continue walking without wandering off course and reaching his destination easily."

This is why instead of permitting the above-mentioned seeker to engage in the twelve tasbīhs, he posed a question which is actually the key to the path. Hadrat Wālā clarified the entire path of guidance and instruction to him by the example of a patient and doctor. In this way, he laid open the reality of the relationship between a shaykh and murīd. Although it is Hadrat Wālā's first question, it will serve as a guiding light for the entire period of this seeker's rectification. All future correspondences, learning, training, seeking information and so on will be based on this.

A shaykh/murīd relationship is like a doctor/patient relationship

Hadrat Wālā himself provides details to the above statement. He says: "The relationship between a shaykh and murīd is exactly like that of a doctor and patient. In this example, thousands of points can be applied."

At this point, we will only mention those applications which apply to our specific discussion. For example, it is the sole duty of a patient to relate everything about his sickness to his doctor, and then leave the examination, diagnosis, prescription, precautions and everything else to the doctor. The patient must neither give his own opinions nor interfere with his examination and prescription. He must also not seek his permission to take any specific medication because his request is absolutely inappropriate and totally in conflict with his position. Yes, he may explain his condition in full and then request for a treatment. The doctor will then prescribe whatever steps are necessary.

In exactly the same way, a spiritually sick person must describe his spiritual ailments to his spiritual doctor and have them treated. Firstly he must merely inform him of his spiritual conditions and request him for rectification. However, he must not give his own opinions about any aspect related to the diagnosis or prescription, not request any specific form of dhikr, nor any specific manner of removing an evil. He must leave the diagnosis and prescription totally to his shaykh. He must never interfere in this regard. His shaykh will ponder over his condition and prescribe a treatment which will suit him. If he needs further clarification of his conditions or further details, he will ask him appropriate questions and complete whatever defects had remained in this regard. He will then prescribe what to do. The murīd must then accept – without any hesitation or objection – whatever prescription and treatment he receives, and then practise on them with full confidence in his shaykh. He must continue informing his shaykh of his conditions after practising on his prescriptions. In fact, even if he does not experience any new condition, he must still inform his shaykh because this is a condition in itself. The murīd must also adhere strictly to whatever changes, alterations, additions, subtractions and cancellations to his conditions which are made periodically by his shaykh. He must

maintain this procedure for the rest of his life. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

> Continue digging and ploughing in this path and do not allow yourself to take a single break for even a moment.

Hadrat Wālā has coined four rhyming words in order to make it easy for a person to remember the above. They are: *ittilā' aur ittibāʿ* and *iʿtiqād aur inqiyād.*

By Hadrat Wālā giving the example of a doctor and patient in the above-quoted reply, he gave to the seeker an entire programme of action and clearly demonstrated to him that the way which he adopted was totally wrong. His request for permission to read the twelve tasbīhs after the tahajjud salāh after seeing others doing it is exactly like a sick patient asking his doctor to prescribe *khamīrah gā'ū zabān* after seeing others taking it – irrespective of whether this medication is suitable for his illness or not.

Furthermore, by comparing the tasbīh to *khamīrah gā'ū zabān*, Hadrat Wālā is making reference to the fact that seeking permission from one's shaykh for certain forms of dhikr is exactly like a sick person who needs a laxative to remove all the filth from his body but is asking the doctor to give him a concoction which is actually a fortifying and strengthening medication for the heart. It is normally given after the removal of an illness in order to build up the patient and strengthen his health. If a soft-hearted doctor were to accede to his request merely to make him happy, it will not benefit the patient's illness in the least. In fact, it is not far fetched to assume that consuming *khamīrah gā'ū zabān* before its time may increase the patient's illness.

Rectification of deeds before dhikr and spiritual practices

Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "In most cases, it proves harmful and detrimental to occupy a seeker in spiritual practices before creating in him the importance of rectification of deeds. If he is made to do the former first, he starts to consider himself to be a very pious person. This is especially so if – incidentally – through his concentration in spiritual practices, he experiences certain spiritual conditions. In such a case he will consider himself to be included in the register of pious personalities. Whereas spiritual conditions of this nature have nothing to do

with piety. Spiritual conditions of this type are even experienced by sinners, immoral persons and unbelievers through striving and toiling. Once the seeker considers these conditions to be signs of piety, he does not see any need for rectification of his self and his deeds nor does he pay any attention to it. He remains in eternal ignorance and is deprived of the actual objective of reaching Allāh *taʿālā* – which can only be acquired through rectification of deeds according to the texts."

In short, through this one short reply of Hadrat Wālā, he opened the entire door of rectification for the above-mentioned seeker. By comparing the tasbīhs to *khamīrah gā'ū zabān*, he specified the position and rank of different forms of dhikr and spiritual practices which are only desirable, while the rectification of deeds is compulsory and more important.

Essentials for the rectification of deeds

Based on the above example, I recall another example of Hadrat Wālā. He says: "Different forms of dhikr and spiritual practices alone are not enough for the rectification of deeds. Rectification requires courage, imposing one's will on one's self, consciousness of the different methods and their repetition. However, the different forms of dhikr certainly aid a person in the path of rectification. The influence of spiritual practices in the rectification of the self is only as much as the juice of anise seed which is added to a laxative. Removal of waste matter from the body is essentially through a laxative, but drinking the juice of anise seed certainly helps the process. If a foolish person does not take the laxative and only drinks the juice of anise seed, the waste matter will never be removed. Yes, if he takes a laxative first and then drinks the juice as an aid, all the waste matter from the depths of the body will be removed very quickly. The juice of anise seed without the laxative is definitely not enough. Yes, the laxative alone without the anise seed juice can suffice, although the purpose will not be achieved with as much ease."

Commencement of dhikr and spiritual practices

The essence of the above is that in the beginning Hadrat Wālā's full focus is on instilling the importance of rectification of deeds in the mind of the seeker. As long as this objective is not realized, Hadrat Wālā does not rest nor does he allow the

seeker to rest. This is also his purpose in constant and excessive inquiries and questions. As long as the seeker does not develop considerable importance to rectification of deeds, Hadrat Wālā does not instruct him to engage in dhikr. Yes, once these two early stages are crossed – i.e. once the importance of rectification of deeds settles in the mind and the seeker pays particular attention to rectification of his deeds – Hadrat Wālā has no hesitation in teaching him different forms of dhikr. He does not wait for the completion of the phase of rectification of deeds before commencing occupation with dhikr.

The programme of the Chishtī masters

Hadrat Wālā says with reference to this system of his: "It was the practice of the Chishtī spiritual masters of the past to first complete the rectification of internal and external deeds and then to initiate the seeker in dhikr and spiritual practices. However, when the latter day elders saw that the lives and courage of people are short, they did not continue this system. Instead, together with rectification of deeds, they taught different forms of dhikr and ran both programmes parallel. Bearing in mind the wellbeing of the seekers of my time, I adopted a middle way between the system of the past and latter spiritual masters. That is, I keep the seeker occupied solely in the rectification of deeds. Once I see that its importance has settled fully in his mind and he is paying special attention to it, I teach him some dhikr and then run both programmes parallel. In short, after looking at the temperaments of the seekers of our time, I made a slight change in the programme of latter spiritual masters in the sense that they used to run both programmes concurrently from the beginning, while I do it after some time."

A reply to a seeker's letter

I quote a reply of Hadrat Wālā's letter on the subject of creating special importance to rectification of deeds in the mind of the seekers. Hadrat Wālā wrote this reply just today, 11 Ramadān al-Mubārak 1354 A.H.

In his previous letter to the seeker, Hadrat Wālā drew his attention to his past shortcomings and directed him towards making up for them. The seeker did not make any mention at all in his next letter, and merely requested for Hadrat Wālā's

prayers and enquired about his health just to please Hadrat Wālā. He also mentioned that eleven and quarter pārās of the Qur'ān were completed by him that night in the tarāwīh salāh.

Hadrat Wālā wrote: "You informed me about your tarāwīh salāh but made no mention of the discomforts and hardships which you imposed on others. Their rights which you trampled can only be atoned by providing them with comfort. Your not mentioning this is similar to a sick person informing his doctor of what types of food he eats, but not of his illness and the medication which he is taking. Will the doctor be happy with him? Only a doctor who wishes to fill his register with names of patients and has no affection for them will do such a thing."

Once again we see Hadrat Wālā using the example of a doctor and a patient.

An answer is explained through a question

Just recently another letter was received from a seeker. It is appropriate to this discussion. The seeker too wrote in his previous letter: "Hadrat, my heart desires to say 'Allāh Allāh' all the time. If Hadrat permits, I will commence with the programme which is laid out for a busy scholar as described in Hadrat's book, *Qasd as-Sabīl*."

Hadrat Wālā replied by asking: "Is this the only objective?"

Here too we see Hadrat Wālā first asking if this is the only objective. In the very first instance, he did not specify the actual objective so that the addressee may use his powers of thinking and realize the actual objective by himself. The reason for this is that when a point is learnt after instructing a person to study it, it settles firmly in the mind and is not forgotten. The above mentioned seeker understood everything from this one question of Hadrat Wālā. This is gauged from the seeker's subsequent reply. He writes: "I realize from the word "only" that although repetition of "Allāh Allāh" is an objective, it is not the only and first objective. It is desired after having purified one's self, as stated by Hadrat Wālā in his lectures. The fundamental objective is rectification. Hadrat Wālā provided excellent treatments for every ailment in our previous correspondences. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the self is being overpowered and a weakness and waning has commenced in the essence of every evil trait. Through Hadrat Wālā's prayers, repeated awareness will firmly embed rectification and the condition of

the heart is changing. Sometimes I find myself hard-hearted and far from Allāh *taʿālā*, while at other times I experience extreme softness which causes me to cry, extend my hands and seek Allāh's pardon. My heart then gushes forth with love for Allāh *taʿālā*. I experience joy in Allāh's name and my heart desires to repeat "Allāh Allāh" but I abstain from it because I have not received permission to continue with it. It was because of the demands of this zeal and joy that I had requested Hadrat Wālā to permit me to repeat "Allāh Allāh". This is my present situation. Hadrat Wālā can now instruct me to do what is most appropriate. Was salām."

A seeker is kept occupied in rectification of the self for a long time

I [the compiler] say: From the subject matter of the above letter the reader must have gauged how beneficial Hadrat Wālā's teaching methodology is. I personally know that the above-mentioned seeker was suffering from severe spiritual ailments and also committing major sins. However, he continually informed Hadrat Wālā of his conditions and got himself rectified and treated. There were times when – even during the course of rectification – he was overpowered by the demands of his self and would commit major sins again. He would revert to Hadrat Wālā and clearly relate his embarrassing actions for the sake of rectification and ask him a way for atonement. On one occasion, Hadrat Wālā wrote as a way of reprimand: "If you cannot exercise your will and courage to abstain from sins which are within your choice, you must never write to me in future. If you write, I will send the letter back without replying to it."

However, since he was a genuine seeker, Hadrat Wālā wrote this reply and also read it to those who were present without disclosing the seeker's identity. Hadrat Wālā added: "I wrote this merely as a reprimand so that he desists from this action in the future. Once I see him back on the path after a few days, I will permit him to correspond with me again." The seeker persisted in his quest until Hadrat Wālā eventually granted him permission. Now look at the results of Hadrat Wālā's method of teaching and instruction. By Allāh's grace, the seeker developed total affinity with the path and was rectified to a great extent as is evident from the above-quoted letter. He is corresponding with Hadrat Wālā for a long time but Hadrat Wālā has confined him solely to rectification of the self without

teaching him any forms of dhikr. Despite this, look at the benefit which he derived and the level of capability which he developed in reaching his objective [Allāh *taʿālā*]. As Hadrat Wālā says: "A stick lies in the sun for some time until it becomes so dry that a single spark can ignite it."

In the same way, the above seeker has developed such capabilities that – Allāh willing - just a few days of dhikr will enable him to realize his objective. In fact, he has achieved a lot already because – by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* – he has control over his self and developed enthusiasm in dhikr and spiritual practices. What else can he desire? This, despite the fact that this person has not even had the opportunity of presenting himself in the Khānqāh as yet. It is through such experiences that Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "When those who adhere to instructional correspondence come here, then by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* they become so capable that in their very first meeting I accept their bayʿah and also permit them to induct murīds [i.e. I appoint them as my khulafā']."

A very valuable analysis on the basis on which khilāfah is conferred has been written by Hadrat Wālā. Allāh willing, it will be quoted in a future chapter. Subsequent to the above seeker's letter, it would seem that his request for dhikr would have been accepted and he would have been given permission to engage in it. However, Hadrat Wālā does not leave a seeker until he has rectified every minute point in him. He therefore wrote the following: "Why did you not write all the details previously? Do you think I have knowledge of the unseen? You may write whatever you like after answering this question."

After writing this reply, Hadrat Wālā said to those who were present: "One must not be satisfied so quickly. He also has to be taught the etiquette of writing letters. When he wrote the first time, he said: 'My heart desires to say Allāh Allāh all the time.' As for the conditions which he wrote now with reference to rectification of the self, he made no mention of them in the first letter. This is why I had to ask him: 'Is this the only objective?' Had he related all his conditions in the first letter, there would have been no reason for me to pose this question. I aim to rectify a seeker completely. This is why I repeatedly ask questions. On the other hand, those with twisted minds say to me: 'You seem to be a well-wisher of the postal service, this is why you make people buy so many stamps and instruct them

to write letters again and again.' Now what reply can I give to such twisted-minded people apart from saying: 'Very well, brother, you can continue thinking like that and stop writing to me. You should rather revert to a person who is not a well-wisher of the postal service. Nowadays, there are many who are not well-wishers of the postal service.'"

Rectification of actions is the essence

Another seeker wrote: "I carry out such and such spiritual practices. Kindly apprise me of the shortcomings which are found in them." Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is based on a person's time and how much he can bear. The essential thing in which failings and progress can be observed is rectification of actions."

Sequence in rectification of actions

Another seeker wrote: "Hadrat Wālā has certainly treated my illness of casting evil gazes. I cannot say that I have been completely cured but – Allāh willing – it will not be wrong for me to say that through Allāh's grace and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, I could not have expected to experience even one tenth of the cure which I did experience due to my severe engrossment in this sin. From among the sins of the body parts, I now find myself backbiting quite a bit. Although this too has decreased compared to before in the sense that previously I did not even perceive it while now I feel remorse after it, I hope that Hadrat Wālā will now provide me with a treatment for backbiting."

Hadrat Wālā asked: "Has the treatment for your previous ailment [casting evil gazes] been completed and taken root?"

The seeker wrote back: "It seems that the urge to look is not non-existent, but there are few and rare occasions when I do commit this sin."

Hadrat Wālā wrote: "What is the meaning of 'few and rare occasions'? if a person says: 'I have given up drinking alcohol, I only drink it now and then', will this be considered to be giving it up?"

I [the compiler] am concluding this point. Many examples which are applicable to it are coming to mind but I have already written quite a bit in this regard. Since many of Hadrat Wālā's principles of teaching and training have come to the fore

under this discussion, the reader is requested to read it carefully and gather the various principles in his mind.

Allāh willing, I will take special care not to mention more than one principle under a single point and be brief in doing it because I would like to conclude this chapter quickly and commence the other chapters. Furthermore, my leave is coming to an end and I hope to write as much of the biography as I can. If not – Allāh forbid – there is a fear of it remaining incomplete. I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to help me and to enable me to complete the remaining chapters quickly. Āmīn.

A seeker is reprimanded for the slightest shortcoming

Hadrat Wālā's focus is on completing the different levels of rectification. This is why he cannot tolerate even the slightest and smallest shortcoming or inattention. He reprimands the person immediately and clearly. He wrote to a seeker: "Your letter contains the following statement: 'I posed a question once before and was deprived of an answer.' Is this not an objection against me? Is this objection not baseless? Is a person not offended by a baseless objection? Can one expect any service when he has offended the other party? Yet you are writing that you are a murīd and have faith in me!? This entails the joining of two opposites. How sad!"

In some cases, Hadrat Wālā goes to the extent of writing: "Do not send any letters to me for as long as you have not learnt some manners."

In other cases, Hadrat Wālā completely gives up teaching and instructing the seeker. He complains quite often: "Nowadays there is no etiquette in the temperaments of people – except for a few. This is why they remain deprived. Nothing can be achieved without respect for one's shaykh. Respect is not confined to honouring and revering the shaykh – this is merely an outward form of respect. The essence of respect is to save one's self from causing harm and to be a source of comfort. If a person is offended by a lot of respect and reverence, then this is also disrespect."

Hadrat Wālā also says: "Some people do not cause offence wittingly. However, the absence of an intent to cause offence is not enough. It is essential to have an intent not to cause offence."

Avoiding futilities

Hadrat Wālā pays special importance to removing the seekers from futile activities and occupying them in essentials. There are countless examples on this point but bearing in mind that I had promised to be brief, I will present just one incident to serve as an example. A seeker who was a scholar wrote: "The thought has come to my defective mind that such and such person who makes such and such claims be included in such and such false group."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "I am quite saddened by the fact that a spiritual relationship is established with me in order to obtain my views on such policies. There are others who are more knowledgeable than me in this field."

Warning against questions which are out of the realm of the object of affinity

In most cases, Hadrat Wālā used to warn the seekers from posing juridical questions only. He would ask them: "Can't these questions be posed to other 'ulamā'? There are many others who are far more qualified than me in this field. I should only be asked about matters concerning your rectification, after all, this is the reason you established a bond with me."

Hadrat Wālā explains the wisdom behind this: By confining themselves to asking juridical questions, the seekers assume that they have fulfilled the rights of bay'ah and their bond with me. They do not pay attention to their rectification. A certain person always asks me to research juridical issues. I continued answering his questions for quite some time, but when I saw that he was restricting himself to this and not asking anything at all about his own rectification – apart from complaining about a lack of spiritual experiences – then in order to save him from this spiritual harm, I frankly said to him: 'Do not ask me to research these juridical issues. Ask me about matters for which you established a link with me, i.e. rectification of the inner self. However, bearing in mind that it is also essential to inquire about juridical matters, you must revert to Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib for this purpose." The Maulānā was alive at the time, and the seeker did as he was told. Now when he writes to me, he writes nothing apart from matters related to his own rectification. In short, he was forced to turn his attention to his own rectification. This benefited him tremendously until he reached the point where – by the grace

of Allāh *taʿālā* – he became one who was attuned to Allāh *taʿālā* and was appointed as a khalīfah."

Hadrat Wālā also says in this regard: "By the will of Allāh, the task of issuing fatwās and answering questions is being carried out in many places. And there are many people who are far more knowledgeable than me in this field. However, the task of spiritual rectification is not being done anywhere with special attention and focus. I saw the need for it and assumed the responsibility of rendering this service although I am, to a certain extent, not on such a level."

A short and comprehensive course of action for the seekers

Every instruction of Hadrat Wālā on the subject of spiritual training is worthy of being written in gold. However, there are some special instructions which are so comprehensive, all-embracing and simple that although they are a collection of just a few simple words, they encompass the entire science of Sufism and contain a complete course of action for the seekers. Although some of these comprehensive statements make up just a few lines, Hadrat Wālā considered them to be separate and complete articles for which he gave them independent titles. For example, *Rūh at-Tarīq, Wudūh at-Tarīq, Futūh at-Tarīq, Tashīl at-Tarīq* and so on. Some of these have already been quoted. A few short-sighted and foolish people made this objection: "Do you ever see articles made up of just a few lines?!" A certain person gave a beautiful reply to this objection. He said: "This is actually an emulation of the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* because He also specified just a few lines, and in some instances, just a single line as a sūrah, e.g. Sūrah al-Kauthar, Sūrah al-ʿAsr and Sūrah al-Ikhlās."

The core of most of these comprehensive teachings is: "Man is only answerable for matters which are within his choice. He is not answerable for what is beyond his will. Therefore, he must go to pains in having courage and using his will in matters which are within his choice. As for those which are not within his choice, he must neither chase after them nor worry about them."

Principles for success in Dīn and in this world

If a person adheres firmly to just this one principle, he will acquire success and rectitude in both Dīn and in this world. He will never experience worry. Hadrat Wālā has clarified the issue

of matters which are within one's choice and those which are not in a manner which was unprecedented for many centuries. He derived so much of benefit from it that thousands of difficulties along the path were solved through it. When a seeker desires rectification of a defect in him, the first question which Hadrat Wālā poses to him is this: "Is it within your choice or not?" If the seeker says that it is within his choice, he says: "If the doing of something is within one's choice, giving it up is also within one's choice. Take the courage to exercise your will and give up that sin." If the seeker says: "It is beyond my choice" and it is really beyond a person's choice, Hadrat Wālā says: "A person is not even answerable for what is beyond him. So there is not even any Dīnī harm in it. Why, then, should a treatment be sought?"

Some people said: "We have understood that there is no Dīnī harm in it because it is beyond one's choice, but discomfort and worry are certainly experienced. And these also need to be treated." Hadrat Wālā replied: "It is not my responsibility to treat discomfort and worry. If not, someone will tell me tomorrow: 'Hadrat, my stomach is paining and this is causing me a lot of worry and discomfort. Show me a treatment for it.'"

A person asked for a treatment for futile conversations. As was his practice, Hadrat Wālā asked: "Is it within your choice or not?" The person wrote back: "It is within my choice, but please provide an easy plan." Hadrat Wālā replied: "For how many things are you going to ask for ease? What, then, would the meaning of this Hadīth be:

حفت الجنة بالمكاره

Paradise is surrounded by difficulties.

Allāh *taʿālā* has placed so much of blessings in Hadrat Wālā's teachings that most of the seekers – when it is emphasised on them to do what is within their will - are inspired to follow what is within their will and many serious faults and sins are given up.

Easy ways to practise on principles

On seeing some people making full efforts to make use of their willpower and asking for ways to combat the demands of the self, Hadrat Wālā said: "Although it is not the responsibility of a shaykh to show an easy procedure, I am showing it as a gift.

By continually trying to combat the self, this need becomes gradually weaker and combating it becomes easier. In short, the procedure which is acquired is also the easy one. However, this principle applies in most cases, not in all. Some people have to strive throughout their lives. A seeker has to be prepared to strive for the rest of his life. After all, we have been sent to this world to strive. Those who experience ease after striving continue receiving rewards for striving because the ease was realized because of the striving."

A person wrote: "I have the destructive and chronic illness of increasing my contact and relations with people. I would really like to give up this habit but I am failing although this is a matter which is within my control."

The only formal answer to this was to tell him to be courageous. However, since he wrote only after embarking on his own efforts, Hadrat Wālā wrote to him saying: "The original treatment is to take courage. However, in order to aid you in this process, you must impose a fine on your self. That is, if you act against your word, you will offer so many rakʿats of salāh or give so much in charity."

My own story

I myself had written to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion and said to him: "I am an introvert by nature. I am terrified by mixing and intermingling with people. When I do meet them, I certainly transgress the limits. I imposed on myself several times but I am unable to realize this even after meeting people only when necessary. I am once again intending to go into seclusion. Once I do this, excessive speaking will automatically come to an end. I earnestly desire to spend all my time in essentials, necessities, dhikr and contemplation. Hadrat Wālā's instruction: "I want no one to speak to anyone here" was totally in accordance with my temperament and nature…

Hadrat Wālā replied: "You have exceeded the bounds in this regard as well. Moderation in every matter is praiseworthy. But certain temperaments cannot achieve it without adopting a certain plan for it. The procedure is that without any intense need, you must not initiate a conversation with anyone nor go to anyone. If a person initiates a conversation with you, reply with what is essential and in a concise manner. And then occupy yourself in dhikr. Allāh willing, you will develop

moderation. I am also praying for you. Inform me after one week."

Look at the valuable simple procedure which Hadrat Wālā asked me to follow. However, a simple procedure is only shown to the one who asks after having tried to exercise his will. There are some to whom he shows an easy way in the very beginning or without the person even asking for it. Hadrat Wālā does this when he gauges through circumstantial evidence that the person is showing special importance to his rectification. The pure Sharīʿah also provides ease in some injunctions and not in others. In other words, strict adherence to ease is not established. We learn from this collection that a shaykh has the choice to show an easy way where he deems fit, and not to show it where it is inappropriate. Hadrat Wālā has gone into a very detailed and scholarly discussion on this subject in his lecture titled *at-Tah-sīl wa at-Tas-hīl maʿa at-Takmīl wa at-Taʿdīl*. It has been published and is worth studying.

In short, Hadrat Wālā resorts a lot to the issue of having a choice or no choice in the course of his programme of rectification. This is because it contains many small points which can be applied and countless objections which can be solved through it. He constantly says: "This issue of having a choice or no choice is half of Sufism, in fact, it is almost its sum total."

At this point, I would like to quote another instruction of Hadrat Wālā which he had written in reply to a seeker's letter. It was quoted previously but is repeated bearing in mind its applicability over here. The same issue of having a choice or no choice is resorted to and a very beneficial aspect of Sufism and a complete course of action is prescribed. The path is made absolutely easy. Hadrat Wālā also titled it *Tas-hīl at-Tarīq* (Simplification of the Path)

A seeker wrote: "I find my condition ruined. There is nothing but perplexity."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "The desire to put yourself into difficulty is certainly not its treatment. The path is absolutely clear – do not worry about what is not within your control. Taking courage is within your control. If you err, make up for the past through seeking forgiveness, and renew your courage for the

future. In addition to courage, adhere to prayer and beseeching Allāh *taʿālā*."

Awareness of sins is not the essential objective

Glory to Allāh! What an excellent course of action! The seekers ought to make it an amulet for themselves and a practice for the rest of their lives.

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to the past: After repenting properly once, do not remain in the grief of sins. Instead, occupy yourself in the tasks ahead. If not, thinking of one's sins and grieving over them will become a natural barrier between yourself and the True Beloved. A servant has been created for the eternal visualization of his True Beloved, not to meditate over his sins. Awareness of sins was necessary for repentance. Now that repentance has been made, what is the need to be conscious of them? Awareness of sins is certainly not the essential objective, it is an attached objective. To be wittingly conscious of one's sins even after repentance means that the attached objective has been made an essential objective. When a mistake is committed, then instead of sitting down and grieving over it, engage in a thorough repentance and seeking of forgiveness, end the matter there, and continue with the tasks ahead. Attaching yourself to the tasks ahead will automatically make up for that mistake.

Even in the case of abundant seeking of forgiveness – for which there are many virtues – a general consciousness is sufficient, viz. "I have sinned and I seek forgiveness for all my sins." Apart from this, Allāh *taʿālā* certainly has knowledge of all your sins, there is no need to have detailed awareness of them all. In fact, the natural consequence of doing this will create a barrier because constant awareness of one's sins results in despondence. A person will think: "I have committed such and such sins, and there are so many of them, how will I ever be pardoned? How will Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with me?" When a person constantly think about another's displeasure, its natural effect is that he becomes withdrawn from that person. In short, a detailed awareness of one's sins causes a natural obstacle. However, if a person thinks of his sins unwittingly, he must make a specific repentance for the sins which he thought of. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself made a prayer which contains an awareness:

مَا عَلِمْتُ مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ اَعْلَمْ

Those which I am aware of and those which I do not know.

This proves that a detailed awareness of one's sins are not necessary for seeking forgiveness. If not, instead of teaching us to say "those which I do not know", he would have instructed us to think of each sin, recall each one and repent for them.

Another Hadīth can be presented as a basis for this issue. It has been explained by Hadrat Wālā in *at-Tasharruf*. Since this explanation clarifies and explains this point quite well, I consider it appropriate to quote it here.

إذا تاب العبد أنسى الله الحفظة ذنوبه وأنسى ذلك جوارحه ومعالمه من الأرض حتى يلقى الله وليس عليه شاهد من الله بذنب. ابن عساكر عن أنس رضي الله عنه.

مدلول الحديث ظاهر ويمكن أن يؤخذ منه بالقياس ما نقل عن بعض العارفين أن من علائم قبول التوبة نسيان العبد الذنب فإن القلب الذي به يتذكر الذنب كالجوارح كما فسروا به قوله تعالى إن السمع والبصر والفؤاد كل أولئك كان عنه مسئولا، أي كل واحد من هذه الأعضاء كان عنه أي عما نسب إليه مسئولا ليشهد على صاحبه (بتصير الرحمن) هذا هو السر في الآخرة. وأما السر في الدنيا فهو أن تذكر الذنب قد يكون حجابا طبعيا من التوجه إلى الله بالانشراح فينسيه الله تعالى إياه، وعندي أن هذا ليس بلازم ولا دائم فإن بعضهم عن التوجه فهذه العلامة لبعض أفراد القبول لا لجميعها.

When a person repents (sincerely, and it is accepted) Allāh ta'ālā *causes the record-keeping angels to forget his sins. He also causes the person's body parts and sections of the earth (i.e. the places where he committed the sins, and which normally give testimony against a sinner on the day of Resurrection) to forget his sins. The person eventually meets Allāh* ta'ālā *without a single witness to testify against him.*

The meaning of this Hadīth is clear. Through analogy, it is possible to accept what has been reported from some spiritual masters, viz. from among the signs of acceptance of a person's repentance is his forgetting that sin. The heart through which sins are remembered is like the body parts as explained by the commentators in the commentary to the verse: "Surely the ears,

eyes and the heart – all of them – will be questioned thereof."[1] *They will be questioned so that they may testify against the person to whom those body parts belonged (the heart is included among the testifiers, so the heart will also be made to forget the sin). This is the wisdom applicable to the Hereafter. As for the wisdom behind causing them to forget in this world, it is that recalling one's sins could result in a natural obstacle for some seekers from directing their selves openly and whole-heartedly towards Allāh* taʿālā *(divine wisdom sometimes removes the natural barrier for the wellbeing of some seekers). According to me, this forgetting is neither essential nor eternal because the intellect of some seekers overwhelms their natural tendencies. For such a person to recall his sins does not prevent him from turning to Allāh* taʿālā*. This sign has been accepted by some individuals, not by all.*

(It is therefore possible for the presence of forgetfulness and non-acceptance of repentance. In fact, the forgetfulness could well be due to negligence. It is also possible for acceptance of repentance and an absence of forgetfulness. In fact, a person should remember with this benefit in mind that continuous seeking of forgiveness would enable him to progress in his acceptance in the eyes of Allāh taʿālā*).*

Reconciliation between the opinion of Shaykh Akbar and the majority

An answer to a question which is related to this subject is mentioned in *Imdād al-Fatāwā*. It is quoted here.

> Question: H̲ad̲rat Shaykh Akbar states in *Futūh̲āt* that a sign of acceptance of repentance is that the effect of that sin is completely obliterated from the mind and the person does not recall it for the rest of his life. This subject is named *Qās̲imah az̲-Z̲ahr*. Imām Shaʿrānī *rah̲imahullāh* makes mention of this issue in his writings in a manner which portrays that he also accepts this. Whereas, in the vast majority of books written by the spiritual masters it is stated that it is essential for a seeker to be conscious of his sins at all times. He must never forget them. Especially Imām Shaʿrānī *rah̲imahullāh* places a lot of stress on this issue. There seems to be

[1] Sūrah Banī Isrāʾīl, 17: 36.

a contradiction between the two. What is the reality and how could the two be reconciled?

Answer: Obliteration does not mean that the person does not recall the sin at all. Rather, the special effect of the repentance – i.e. natural despondence – does not remain even though he may remember it. If doctrinal despondence also exists, this does not contradict the instruction to remember one's sin. And this too does not apply to everyone. Rather, it applies to certain temperaments for whom natural despondence becomes an obstacle from whole-heartedness in obedience. The original texts are not before me at present. I answered in the light of what was quoted in the question. It is possible for a better way of reconciliation between the two views.

Five points for rectification of actions

All the above was mentioned by the way while explaining details about the issue of actions which are within one's choice and those which are not. I now return to this issue. Hadrat Wālā explains the same issue [of actions which are within one's choice and those which are not] through various other titles, e.g. rational and natural, deeds and conditions, active and passive actions, objectives and non-objectives. We now have five titles, but all have the same meaning, i.e. the statement of Hadrat Wālā which was presented to the reader at the beginning – man is answerable for actions which are within his choice, not for those which are beyond him. Hadrat Wālā resorts to these five titles profusely in the course of his programme of rectification and solves many major difficulties of the seekers through them. So much so that the lives of many seekers were saved and the īmān of many remained intact through them. Even now, many are living by taking support from these titles. Had these points of Hadrat Wālā not been before them, they would have either become despondent of their īmān, destroyed themselves or – Allāh forbid – renounced īmān.

Some of Hadrat Wālā's statements on these five titles are now presented concisely to serve as examples. He says with regard to actions which are within one's choice and those which are not:

It is within one's choice to bring whisperings in one's mind. A person must abstain from doing this. As for the inundation of whisperings, this is not within a person's choice. He must not bother about them. However, to maintain whisperings which have come on their own and to keep them in the mind is blameworthy because it is within one's choice to do this. In the same way, it is within one's power to attach the heart when engaged in dhikr, reciting the Qur'ān and performing salāh. But the heart to attach itself, this is not within one's choice. A person must gather the causes and means which would enable attachment of the heart. If after this, the heart still does not become attached, he must continue with his actions and impose on himself to carry them out. In the same way, he must not grieve over his inclination towards sins because such an inclination is not within his will. However, to abstain from acting according to the dictates and demands of that inclination is within his control. A person is not taken to task for mere inclination, he is taken to task for acting on it.

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to the rational and natural:

Man is accountable for rational matters because they are within his choice. He is not accountable for natural matters because they are not within his choice.

A seeker wrote: "Previously when I used to miss the fajr salāh, I used to cry profusely. But now I do not feel any grief. I feel my heart has become black." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Natural grief is not the objective, rational grief is. And you have this quality. Sorrow over the absence of grief is a sign that you have rational grief."

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to deeds and conditions:

Deeds are the objectives, not conditions. This is because deeds are within one's control, conditions are not.

There was a person who used to correspond with Hadrat Wālā on matters related to the spiritual path. He wanted to acquire yearning. Hadrat Wālā finally wrote to him in conclusion: "Active deeds are considered, not passive. One should give importance to deeds because they are within one's control. He must not hanker after passive actions because they are beyond one's control."

He says with regard to objective and non-objectives:

The stations are the objectives, i.e. deeds which are within one's control, and not conditions which are beyond one's control.

He also says: "Although praiseworthy conditions are worthy of praise, they are not the objectives because they are not within one's control. Neither is their acquisition essential nor is their existence eternal. If a person acquires them, he must be grateful. If he does not acquire them or they disappear after having acquired them, he must not grieve."

I recall expressing my sorrow in one of my letters to Hadrat Wālā by saying: "During my last visit, I had come with a special spiritual condition which I had never experienced before. However, after I returned home, it gradually waned until it became non-existent."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Experiencing a certain spiritual condition and it remaining for some time is a boon in itself. The thing which remains forever is only one's intellect and īmān. Everything else comes and goes."

Half of Sufism

As we can see, Allāh *taʿālā* exposed the issue of actions which are within one's choice and those which are not in such a manner to Hadrat Wālā that he can easily put it to use under various titles depending on the understanding and capabilities of the seekers. This issue proves to be most beneficial on every occasion. There is no exaggeration in Hadrat Wālā's statement when he says: "This issue of having a choice or no choice is half of Sufism, in fact, it is almost its sum total."

No matter to what extent we ponder over it, there is probably no aspect of spiritual training and rectification which is not directly or indirectly connected to this issue. There is probably no stage of the path wherein it does not serve as a guiding lamp.

Steering the seekers away from results and spiritual conditions

Hadrat Wālā emphatically keeps the seekers away from results and spiritual conditions. He constantly says: "The soul of results is close proximity. This is what a person should focus on. He must not await any other results." In fact, all superfluous matters related to the path are treated in such a manner by Hadrat Wālā that a seeker is compelled to shift

away from them and to occupy himself in the essentials and objectives of the path. For example, if a person relates a dream to him for interpretation, then instead of interpreting it, he would say: "I have no affinity whatsoever with interpretation of dreams. You should rather ask me about matters which occur during wakefulness." A poet says:

> I am neither the night nor the worshipper of the night, which would qualify me to interpret dreams. I am the slave of the sun. This is why I talk about matters related to the sun.

"What benefit is there in dreams? Consideration is given to what happens when a person is in a state of wakefulness – a state which is within his control. If a person does not rectify his state of wakefulness, and dreams that he is traversing the Grand Throne and Chair [of Allāh *taʿālā*], he does not acquire the slightest bit of proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*. On the other hand, if a person's state of wakefulness is rectified to the required level, then even if he sees himself in the Hell-fire in his dream, he is considered to be close to Allāh *taʿālā*. I do not intend refuting dreams altogether. However, the masses have raised the level of dreams beyond that of glad-tidings, and this is what I intend lowering."

If someone complained to him: "Previously I used to cry a lot but now I cannot seem to cry", Hadrat Wālā would reply: "Crying of the eyes is not the objective, crying of the heart is, and you have acquired this because you are sorrowful over the fact that you are unable to cry anymore."

Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion:

"Even if a person wants to see results and experience spiritual conditions, it is necessary to remain aloof from them because spiritual conditions are experienced through full focus. If a person focuses on the descent of spiritual conditions, where will he ever be focussed? This is why an intelligent and sharp person does not experience spiritual conditions. Even if he does, they are rare because his mind is always working and he is not focussed on one thing. And spiritual conditions cannot be experienced without total focus. This is why an intelligent person rarely experiences spiritual conditions. On the other hand, the person whose intelligence is diminished has a lot of affinity with such influences. Although the opposite is not

necessarily true, such people are extremely good for themselves but of little benefit to others."

To sum up, Hadrat Wālā emphatically prohibits the seekers from turning their attention towards spiritual conditions. If anyone relates his spiritual conditions to him, he would reply: "Do not bother about them and remain focussed on the work at hand. A seeker must remain focussed on what he has to do or else he will occupy himself in non-objectives and forget about his actual work. Furthermore, spiritual conditions also cease because their descent is by virtue of remain engrossed in the work at hand. Like a lamp whose light will remain for as long as the oil reaches the wick. If adding oil is stopped totally, the light will decrease gradually and eventually become extinguished."

The status of expositions and spiritual conditions

Hadrat Wālā said with regard to the same subject:

"Expositions, spiritual conditions, spiritual emotions and so on are of no relevance in the path of Sufism. In fact, in most cases they become obstacles in the path. Their absence is better and devoid of danger. People desire them unnecessarily. This subject can be understood through the following example:

A person is travelling on a passenger train which stops at every station before reaching Delhi. This train's windows are also open. The man enjoys the journey by looking at the scenery which he is passing. He stops at Taundla, Itāwah and other stations, gets off, climbs on again and eventually reaches Delhi. Another person boards an express train from Kānpūr. The train's windows are closed. The train speeds on towards Delhi and reaches there in a short time. The man who was on this train knew nothing of the scenery outside nor of the stations which the train passed through. If the other person informs him of the scenery and stations which he missed, and he therefore thinks that he has not even reached Delhi [bearing in mind that he did not see all these things], then it actually shows his ingratitude and ignorance because he had boarded a special express train which was travelling at a high speed and reached Delhi within a few hours. On the other hand, the other person reached much later because he came by a passenger train which was travelling at a slow speed and also stopping at every station. In fact, there is an additional danger for the

person travelling by passenger train. He may well be attracted to one of the places where the train stopped, get off there, and never reach Delhi for the rest of his life.

In the same way, some seekers consider spiritual experiences to be the objective and remain engrossed in them without proceeding forward. The path of Sufism which is treaded without expositions, spiritual experiences and so on is therefore much safer. Expositions and the like are – in some cases – extremely dangerous. Our Hadrat Hājī Sāhib used to say: "An effulgent obstacle is more serious than a dark obstacle. A seeker is not deluded by a dark obstacle because he knows it for what it is. On the other hand, he is deluded and deceived by an effulgent obstacle and considers it to be his objective."

I [the compiler] say: Despite these restrictions, by the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, the seekers who are affiliated to Hadrat Wālā experience every type of praiseworthy spiritual condition. Crying and beseeching, zeal and fervour, enthusiasm and yearning, spiritual ecstasy and delight, fear and affinity, retraction and expansion – all these types of conditions are continually experienced by his associates. There was a time when a certain seeker used to be overcome by such a strong spiritual condition at the time of tahajjud that all those who were present used to become distressed. Eventually, Hadrat Wālā himself spent the night in the Khānqāh. When it was the time to engage in dhikr, he seated this particular seeker next to him. When the seeker started to experience an ecstasy, he got up from there. Hadrat Wālā followed him, caught him, gave him a hard slap – as a form of treatment – and scolded him harshly saying: "What do you think, you are gone too big? Do you think that all zeal and fervour has been reserved for you alone? Just you watch, I will remove all your zeal and fervour today!"

One of the ways of treating such a person is not to accord him any value. So when Hadrat Wālā treated him in this way, all his zeal and fervour disappeared and he never experienced such a condition again. Subsequently, he met Hadrat Wālā after a long time in Calcutta and said to him: "I was never overcome by a spiritual condition since that day."

Consideration to praiseworthy conditions

Hadrat Wālā did not treat every condition as above. Instead, he very often says with regard to praiseworthy conditions: "A spiritual experience should be treated like a temperamental but honourable guest. He must be treated with a lot of courtesy or else the slightest inattention will cause him to leave."

There is a seeker who is overcome by his conditions and is reduced to tears and crying when he hears Hadrat Wālā's recitation of the Qur'ān and his statements. One day in the fajr salāh he was trying to withhold his urge to cry. Hadrat Wālā perceived this and when he completed the salāh, he turned around and said: "There is no need to swallow and subdue one's urge. If you feel like crying, you may do so to your heart's desire and lighten your burden. You may fall ill if you subdue and suppress it too much."

Spiritual conditions must be controlled

I [the compiler] had to hand-deliver Hadrat Wālā's written reply to one of the seeker's who was residing in the Khānqāh. When Hadrat Wālā despatched me with it, he emphasised: "Once you hand it over to him, you must leave there immediately because there must be no obstacle to the condition which he is going to experience after reading what I wrote. He must be given full freedom in such a condition or else the effect of what I wrote will not be completed if others are present. Even if it does take effect, he will suppress it out of bashfulness, and this will cause him harm." In short, Hadrat Wālā treats each person according to what is most suited for that person. However, he prefers all forms of ecstasy, zeal, fervour, crying and so on to take place in privacy, not in public.

Since this was also the preferred way of Hadrat Wālā, those who remained in his company gradually developed this temperament. The following couplets composed by myself apply to such seekers:

> I had come crying to you, but I am now leaving you
> with silence on my lips and joy in my heart.
>
> I had come to you while making a big noise and din.
> I am now leaving in silence with my head downcast.

Hadrat Wālā teaches us that the essential response to such conditions is to suppress them. But if a person is overwhelmed

and there is pain in suppressing them, then it would be more appropriate to give vent to them. In this way, the overwhelming experience will disappear. Once this happens and the condition comes within the limit of control, he must control and suppress it immediately.

When Hadrat Wālā said this, I said to him: "But Hadrat Wālā quotes this saying of the elders which states that a spiritual experience should be treated as an esteemed guest and his right should be fulfilled." Hadrat Wālā replied immediately: "A spiritual experience will only be referred to as a guest when the experience overpowers a person. In such a case, he must certainly fulfil its rights. However, before it overwhelms a person, it is neither a guest nor does it enjoy any rights. If its rights are fulfilled before it overwhelms a person, it is similar to seeing a traveller on the road and forcing him to become your guest, and saying to him: 'You are my guest, come, let me fulfil your rights.'"

Abstain from a distinguishing position

Conditions and experiences of this nature can be entertained, but they must remain inside, not come out into the open. I recall another statement of Hadrat Wālā: "A person must pay a lot of importance to piety and righteousness. However, as far as possible, he must not allow a distinguishing position for himself to develop whereby he becomes well-known. When he has the occasion of interacting with people, he must joke a little with them so that they do not start attributing piety to him. However, he must never engage in excessive laughing and joking because this is harmful. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said with regard to laughing excessively:

إياك وكثرة الضحك فإن كثرة الضحك تميت القلب

Beware of excessive laughter because it deadens the heart.

Types of beautiful speech: "Hadrat 'Attār *rahimahullāh* says with reference to excessive speech:

> Excessive talking deadens the heart in the body even
> if your talks are as valuable as the pearls of Eden.

You can try this out yourself and you will see that excessive talking causes the heart to become lightless. If a boiling cauldron of food is about to over-boil and nothing is done to

stop it, all the spices will boil over and the food will remain tasteless. So even if good conversations are engaged in unnecessarily, they will have no effect."

Hadrat Wālā added: "It is generally understood that there are three categories of speech: (1) beneficial, (2) harmful, (3) futile – neither beneficial nor harmful. However, as regards outcome, I feel that there are only two categories, beneficial and harmful. This is because speech which is neither harmful nor beneficial eventually proves to be harmful. A person who occupies himself in futile activities will generally be found lacking in carrying out necessary activities. This is not confined to laughing and talking but all lawful activities. Excesses in them are harmful. However, if there is no excessiveness and there is moderation in lawful activities, then instead of being harmful, they are beneficial. This is especially so when the occupation is based on some wisdom because the occupation creates vigour which in turn helps a person in carrying out acts of obedience with ease.

When occupation in a lawful activity creates discomfort in the heart, a person must realize that the activity has now reached a level of harm. He must distance himself immediately from it. However, this criterion is only for that person who has developed such a perception through companionship of a shaykh and adhering strictly to dhikr and obedience. As for a novice, he must not prescribe anything for himself. He must inform his shaykh of every condition separately and ask him for a course of action for each one. He must then adhere to whatever he prescribes for whichever condition."

The harms of increasing spiritual conditions

Hadrat Wālā was very concerned about seekers not allowing conditions to increase beyond their own levels or else it would cause many harms. Hadrat Wālā sorrowfully relates the statement of a dervish who used to remain in solitude. The dervish considered one of Hadrat Wālā's attendants to be a pious person and asked him about his spiritual practices and whether he sees anything [of the unseen] when he carries them out. The attendant replied that he does not see anything. The dervish said: "So what is the benefit of those practices? Are you only going to receive rewards for them?!" After relating this statement, Hadrat Wālā says: "I was extremely saddened and

also astonished by his response because he considered rewards – which are the souls of all good deeds – to be so insignificant."

Hadrat Wālā added: "Solitude where a person does not even meet and interact with spiritual masters is harmful. Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* says with reference to solitude of this nature:

> The thoughts of an ignorant person who remains in solitude eventually terminate with his rejection of Dīn.

Hadrat Wālā continues: "These are the harms of giving more than necessary importance to spiritual conditions. Their status is only like sweets which are given to children to encourage them to study. This is the import of the following statement of Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* when he said:

تلك خيالات تربى بها أطفال الطريقة

Some novices who are actually children in the path are given conditions of yearning and enthusiasm in order to make them tread the path.

Hadrat Wālā writes to a very senior scholar and speaks to him about a condition which is superior to all spiritual conditions, viz. firmness. He writes: "Do not pay any attention to firmness. The purpose of firmness is to put into action. Action is not to be used as a means to obtain firmness. If action is realized without firmness, the objective has been acquired."

Glory to Allāh! Look at how Allāh *taʿālā* clarified the realities of the path through Hadrat Wālā. Look at how He removed the followers of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* from mistakes and placed them on the path of the Sunnah – a programme which had become almost non-existent in these times especially among the Sufis.

Difference between firmness and steadfastness

When questioned, Hadrat Wālā explained the difference between firmness and steadfastness as follows: "Firmness is a condition while steadfastness is a station. Firmness is a natural level of rectification which is not within one's choice. Steadfastness is a rational level which is within one's choice. Steadfastness is an objective while firmness is not, although it is praiseworthy."

The rational and natural level of īmān and actions

Hadrat Wālā explains the rational and natural level of īmān and actions as follows: "The rational level is superior because it is longer lasting and stems from spirituality. At the same time, this does not mean that the rational level is completely devoid of the natural level. It does have a necessary amount of the natural level because the rational level alone is generally not enough for the carrying out of actions. In the same way, the natural level also contains some element of the rational level. In short, both levels contain an element of the other. However, they are differentiated on the basis of the level which is overwhelming and overpowering."

The gist of all this is that Hadrat Wālā neither rejects spiritual conditions outright nor does he give more than necessary value to them. Instead, he instructs the seekers that when they experience praiseworthy conditions, they must consider them to be such and be grateful. However, they must not consider them to be the objectives, as signs of perfection, essentials of the path or the essentials of piety.

Differentiating between thoughts and conditions

There are some instances where – provided there is no reason to prevent it – Hadrat Wālā congratulates the person on experiencing certain spiritual conditions in order to encourage him further. However, he does not consider every condition of the seekers to be a spiritual condition. He says in his light-hearted way: "All the conditions which are experienced in this path are not *bātinī* (internal, spiritual). They are also *batnī* (related to the stomach, the physical self) which stem from the damage of the stomach and a light fever in it."

If a seeker informs Hadrat Wālā of a special condition and he learns through certain indications [that they are physical], he advises the seeker to revert to a specialist physician and have it diagnosed. Hadrat Wālā adds: "The physician will check whether your heart is weak, there is "dryness" in your brains, whether you have a light fever and so on. In most cases, Hadrat Wālā's suspicions prove to be correct and it is established that the cause of the condition was physical. Hadrat Wālā advises such people to consult medical doctors and instructs them to stop all forms of dhikr. Some spiritual masters misdiagnosed the mental thoughts of their associates

and thought they were spiritual conditions. Hadrat Wālā said in this regard: "A shaykh also has to have a certain amount of medical knowledge so that he does not consider thoughts to be conditions."

Love for the shaykh and following the Sunnah

Hadrat Wālā constantly quotes the following statement of Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* which much emphasis and importance. The Mujaddid said: "Even if thousands of forms of darkness are experienced while having a shaykh and following the Sunnah, they are all considered to be forms of light. But if there is just one shortcoming in this regard [having a shaykh and following the Sunnah] and there are thousands of forms of light, they are all forms of darkness."

Hadrat Wālā very often quotes the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*:

> No matter what a seeker experiences while on the path of Sufism, it is for his own good. O heart! No one goes astray while on a straight path.

However, Hadrat Wālā also says: "There are two requisites for it. One is the coming and the other is the straight path. The essence of the first is that the condition must have come on its own and not brought. In other words, it must be involuntary and not voluntary. The above couplet mentions what one "experiences" [or what comes involuntarily] and not one which is brought. Something which comes on its own is not blameworthy no matter how bad the external may seem. This is because it is involuntary. On the other hand, the one that is brought can be divided into two: praiseworthy and blameworthy. This is the essence of the first prerequisite. The second prerequisite is that it must be on the straight path. The essence of this couplet will thus be: If a seeker remains firm on the straight path, then no matter what type of involuntary condition he experiences – whether agreeable or disagreeable – it is always for the good of the seeker."

Remaining occupied in dhikr and obedience:

Hadrat Wālā says: "A seeker must compel himself to remain occupied in dhikr and obedience. He must neither desire ease nor must he see whether he is benefiting or not. Preoccupation

in dhikr and obedience is the actual objective and the real benefit."

He wrote to a seeker: "Do not allow the heart to demand and await the realization of your objective because this too is an obstacle. It causes confusion which puts an end to concentration and handing one's affairs to Allāh *taʿālā*. The latter two are temporary prerequisites for reaching Allāh *taʿālā*. Establish this firmly within yourself for it is the soul of Sufism."

Hadrat Wālā also says: "Do not wait for enthusiasm and ease to occupy yourself in dhikr and obedience. Instead, impose on yourself to start doing good deeds. Ease will develop gradually from this and so will enthusiasm."

He explained the above theme as follows: "People feel that they should wait until they develop enthusiasm, only then will they commence with actions. Whereas enthusiasm is waiting for the person to commence with his actions so that enthusiasm could be formed."

Continue dhikr whether you feel like it or not

Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion: "Continue dhikr whether you feel like it or not. Gradually you will become so habituated to it that you will not feel restful without it. This is similar to a person who starts smoking the huqqah. Initially, he feels dizzy, he feels nauseous and also vomits. However, when he continues smoking it, he becomes so addicted to it that he will be prepared to forgo his food for two pulls on a huqqah."

He said on another occasion: "There is benefit from the very beginning but the person does not perceive it. Like a child who grows daily but we cannot say with certainty how much he has grown on a particular day. After the passing of some time, when we think of his past state, we realize that he grew to a certain extent when compared to what he is at present. The same applies to dhikr. In the beginning, a person feels as if he is not deriving any benefit at all from it whereas he is deriving benefit all the time. After the passage of some time he compares his present condition to his past and sees a huge difference between the two."

From Hadrat Wālā's example of a growing child I recall another statement which he said to me. After commencing dhikr and

other spiritual practices, I said to him: “I am not benefiting from dhikr as much as I would like.” He immediately replied in a very comforting tone: “If a person wants his infant child to turn ten years of age right now, will it happen? He will only turn ten after the passage of ten years.”

Dhikr never goes to waste

A person wrote to Hadrat Wālā and said that he does not perceive any benefit. Hadrat Wālā replied: “The dhikr which you are engaged in at present should not be considered to be useless. All of it is being collected. Allāh willing, it will all be exposed to you.”

Hadrat Wālā said: “A drop of water falls on a rock. When this is followed by many drops, a hole forms in it. Will we say that it was only the last drop which caused the hole to form? Never. Rather, the hole is a result of the collective number of water drops. The first drop had as much influence as the last drop in forming the hole. The first drop should never be considered to be ineffective even though it may appear to be so. In the same way, the dhikr of the first day which is considered to be fruitless is definitely not fruitless. The special condition which will develop at the end would have been influenced by the dhikr of the first day exactly as the influence of the dhikr of the last day. It was not the dhikr of the last day alone which caused this condition. Rather, a collective number was stipulated and it was decided that such and such condition will develop after so many days. Once that number of days was completed, the effect and condition manifested themselves. The dhikr of each and every day has as much influence in creating that condition as the dhikr of the last. For example, a person eats fortified foods or a special soup for a period of time until he becomes strong and full of vigour. Was it the fortified food of the last day only which gave him that vigour? Certainly not. Rather, it was the collective dosage of all those days which resulted in this condition. It is immature to consider the dosage of the first day to be useless.”

If there is no dhikr, there should certainly be determination and regret

While emphasising the need to remain attached to one’s task, Hadrat Wālā constantly says: “The spiritual masters say:

لا وارد لمن لا ورد له

A person without a spiritual practice cannot experience a spiritual condition.

In fact, they go to the extent of saying: “If a person cannot engage in dhikr, he should at least make a determination to do it and regret not doing it.”

In short, two things are most essential in this path, viz. continuous striving and awareness. A seeker had written a lengthy letter in which he described his failure. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: “The objective is to see the objective [Allāh *taʿālā*]. The way of doing this is to see striving. As long as there is a defect in this regard, then the prelude to seeing the objective is determination to strive. Allāh willing, this will inspire a person to strive. He will then realize the objective of seeing the objective [Allāh *taʿālā*]. This is the sequence which has to be followed. Allāh willing, it will be completed and realized gradually in an excellent way. However, you will have to remain attached to the task at hand. If any shortcoming is experienced, you must continue striving to realize your objective. Allāh willing, you will not be deprived. I too am praying for you.”

We see how Hadrat Wālā continually emphasises on the seekers to impose on themselves to continue with the task at hand. He says: “Success can only be realized through striving. Those who strive in this path are never unsuccessful because Allāh *taʿālā* has promised:

مَنْ اَرَادَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَسَعٰى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَّشْكُوْرًا

Whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it while he is a believer, then the striving of such people is acknowledged.[1]

While speaking on the same subject on one occasion, Hadrat Wālā added this one essential prerequisite: “When a person formally studies under a shaykh and then engages in dhikr, he experiences success.”

I said to him: “Dhikr is something which always brings success, it does not need a shaykh as a go-between.” Hadrat Wālā replied: “It is essentially dhikr which brings the success, but the mediation of a shaykh is also necessary. For example,

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[1] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 19.

the blade of a sword does the cutting, but it is essential for it to be in someone's hand [who is going to wield it]."

By and large, Hadrat Wālā delivers lengthy and forceful speeches on the benefit and need for a shaykh's companionship. He says: "The rectification that can be achieved by remaining in a shaykh's company cannot be achieved by being far from him. The physical treatment a person can receive while staying under the wing of a physician cannot be received while being far from him. Moreover, by remaining close to a shaykh, a seeker continually observes and adopts his character and acts of worship, and absorbs his excellent qualities. In this way, the "colour" of the shaykh comes on to him with each passing day. Furthermore, if a person does not spend a considerable amount of time in the company of his shaykh, he cannot develop affinity with him. Generally, deriving benefit from this path is dependent on affinity with one's shaykh."

The need for a shaykh's company

There was a seeker who spent time in Hadrat Wālā's company just once. He continued writing to Hadrat Wālā for many years and felt this was sufficient. However, when he was overcome by a calamity, he experienced doubts even about his beliefs despite being very firm on Dīn. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*. When Hadrat Wālā heard about his condition, he said: "If a person does not remain in the company of his shaykh, he cannot develop affinity." When this person wrote to Hadrat Wālā and sought his answers to some doubts and misgivings which he had about certain matters related to Islam, Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "If you contract an illness which necessitates remaining under the direct care of a doctor, what do you think you will have to do in such a situation?" Hadrat Wālā meant that there is a need for him to come and stay in his company, but he wrote it in a tone which displayed his own independence.

The key to success

Love for one's shaykh is synonymous to total and complete affinity. Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "Love for one's shaykh is the key to success and the key to all joys and blessings."

However, Hadrat Wālā never allowed love for one's shaykh to go beyond its limits among his associates. He considered rational

love, i.e. obedience to be totally sufficient because natural love is not voluntary, and a person is not accountable for involuntary matters. The letter of a seeker is quoted to serve as an example:

> Condition: I extend my hand in prayer before Allāh *taʿālā* to create love for Hadrat Wālā in my heart. However, not even an iota of love is developing in my heart. This is causing me a lot of restlessness and discomfort.
>
> Reply: There are different forms of love. One of them is the one which you already have. A clear indication of it is that the possibility of a lack of it is causing you to become restless.
>
> Condition: Very often I visualize Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, direct him towards me and read the following couplet with real enthusiasm and yearning:
>
> O Khidr! Help this bashful person because I am going on foot and my companion is riding.
>
> Reply: There is absolutely no need for this.
>
> Condition: Visualization of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* remains for a short while. It is then wiped out and I perceive an attention and attraction towards Allāh *taʿālā* on a special path.
>
> Reply: Glory to Allāh! This turning towards Allāh *taʿālā* is the actual objective and love for one shaykh is the means to realizing it. If Allāh *taʿālā* confers this objective to a person while he does not have the least amount of the normal love for his shaykh, but he obeys and follows his shaykh, such a person is most certainly on the true path.
>
> 21 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1334 A.H.

One of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' wrote complaining about his lack of affinity. His letter together with Hadrat Wālā's reply is quoted from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.

> Condition: When I look at Hadrat Wālā's extensive knowledge and understanding, and my own deficiencies, I experience a state of despondency.

Most of the time I feel aggrieved over the fact that I have not developed any affinity with Hadrat Wālā. I do not understand what I should do.

Reply: This is also a type of compatibility that one understands that he is incompatible. Consider the fact that a servant has a relationship with Allāh *taʿālā* whereas how can there be a relationship between a mortal and the Eternal? Thus, the meaning of relationship will be that one realizes the height of Allāh's grandeur and how insignificant the servant is. This type of understanding is called compatibility in the technical sense. After all, "how can dust be compared to the Eternal!"

Condition: I cannot even fully express whatever is in my heart.

Reply: This too is a branch of that absence of affinity which is really affinity. (Note: This refers to involuntary affinity with one's shaykh. As for voluntary affinity, its acquisition is essential).

Hadrat Wālā prohibits his associates from unnecessary intentional visualization of one's shaykh because of some of the harms which it entails. However, if it takes place unintentionally, he does not compel the person to repulse it. Instead, he says that it is beneficial. In short, there is neither excess nor shortcoming with Hadrat Wālā. This is the real quality of a spiritual master.

The prerequisite for benefiting from companionship

When speaking about the benefits of companionship of a shaykh Hadrat Wālā says: "The companionship of a shaykh is only beneficial when a seeker remains occupied in the dhikr and spiritual practices which the shaykh instructed him to carry out. There are some people who are always moving around and remaining with pious personalities but do not do anything themselves. They do not acquire anything. They always remain deprived. Some people spend a lot of time in a shaykh's company and also take out a little time to engage in some sort of dhikr. This too is insufficient. A major portion of the time ought to be spent in dhikr and spiritual practices, only then is a shaykh's company of benefit."

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to the amount of dhikr: “It should neither be too much to the extent of causing fatigue nor so less that no fatigue at all is experienced. Instead, the amount should be such that although it causes some fatigue, the person is able to bear doing it continually. A little fatigue is necessary to derive benefit. This is so that the self experiences some striving.”

The extent and nature of dhikr

Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: “Impose on yourself only that amount which you can carry out with continuity. But if you find an opportunity and feel energetic, you may do more. The wisdom behind this is that you will be protected against the misfortune of missing it and safeguarded from anxiety. Both of which are harmful. Furthermore, when you are inspired to do more, you will experience joy and your courage will increase.”

The above is with regard to the extent of dhikr. As for its nature, he says in this regard: “Choose the manner which interests you more. The one in which you have more interest will be more beneficial. However, be especially mindful of the heart not demanding you to complete your quota quickly. If a person’s manner of dhikr itself is fast and flowing, there is no harm in it. But there must be no demand from the self to try and complete as quickly as possible.”

We had quoted a letter previously. We are quoting it again because it applies to this discussion. A novice seeker wrote: “I am living far from Hadrat. How can I engage in dhikr in the correct manner?” Hadrat Wālā replied: “What is so difficult about it? Ensure that the heart and tongue join in the dhikr. This is the correct manner.”

The same person also requested: Please ask such and such khalīfah of yours to demonstrate to me the method of the 12 tasbīhs.

Hadrat Wālā replied: “There is no need for it. These restrictions [to the number of tasbīhs] are not the objectives. The sole objective is dhikr. If one person is travelling at a very average speed and another at a fast speed, the two will still reach their destination. As for the actual speed, this contains additional benefits and wisdoms for which the actual destination is not dependent.”

Do not worry about restrictions and subtleties

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to restrictions and dhikr: "Nowadays the temperaments are weak. This is why restrictions are by and large causes of confusion. A person should therefore not give any importance to them. In the same way, a person should not worry about the Latā'if Sittah because they too cause confusion. The essential thing is the heart. All one's focus should be on it. When it becomes illuminated, the Latā'if automatically become illuminated. This has been the way of our Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and is supported by the following Hadīth:

إن في الجسد مضغة إذا صلحت صلح الجسد كله، وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله، ألا وهي القلب.

There is a piece of flesh in the body. If it is sound, the entire body will be sound. If it is ruined, the entire body will be ruined. Listen! It is the heart.

Focussing on Allāh at the time of dhikr

A seeker wrote to Hadrat Wālā: "I am trying to practise the Latā'if Sittah." He replied: "The realities are the objectives, not the Latā'if."

Hadrat Wālā says: "If it can be done easily, one must focus on the Being who is being remembered in the dhikr. If a person cannot do this, he must focus on the dhikr itself." During my initial stages, Hadrat Wālā taught me to meditate and imagine that my heart is joining me in the dhikr which my tongue is making, and that it is a partner in my dhikr."

As far as I can remember, he also taught a novice seeker to meditate and imagine that the Ka'bah is in front of him in the course of his dhikr. And when sending salutations, he must imagine the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is before him. In other words, he is standing before the grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and sending salutations, and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is becoming pleased with him.

In short, Hadrat Wālā will see the capability and inclination of each seeker and teach him a method which would suit him best. If it can be done easily, he informs them that the most superior and beneficial form of visualization is that of the Being of Allāh *ta'ālā*. In fact, he considers it to be the fundamental

objective. However, in every situation he emphasises that excessive efforts must not be put into focus and concentration or else the heart and mind will become afflicted and concentration will be lost. Too much of effort causes fatigue and grief. This in turn will put an end to all benefit. Just a moderate and balanced focus is enough. By doing this, complete proficiency is achieved gradually and a person is able to enjoy complete and total focus and concentration. To sum up, too much of effort in this regard is harmful. Only that much is sufficient as much as a weak memorizer of the Qur'ān needs – he thinks carefully while reading from memory."

Prerequisite for dhikr to be beneficial

Hadrat Wālā gives a lot of importance to explaining an essential prerequisite for dhikr to be of benefit. He says: "Dhikr should not be made without concentration with the mere intention of completing the prescribed number of repetitions. Instead, the seeker must do it with the intention of deriving benefit and blessings from it. He must have this intention all the time. However, he must not be on the look out to see the benefit or wait for it. This is harmful because it causes confusion. A major reason why many people are deprived of the blessings of dhikr is that they do not do it with the intention of benefit."

Hadrat Wālā placed a lot of emphasis on this subject in his *Tarīq Qalandar*. Necessary portions of it were quoted previously. The essence of this subject is that the reason why people do not develop love for Allāh *taʿālā* through good deeds is that they do not do them with the intention of acquiring Allāh's love. They merely do them with an empty mind."

The limits of "loud" and "soft" dhikr

Hadrat Wālā teaches a slightly loud form of dhikr. At the same time, if a person's voice becomes loud later on because of his zeal, he must allow it to get loud; there is no need to suppress it. However, if it is going to cause disturbance and confusion to people who are asleep or those who are performing salāh, he emphasises that it must be absolutely silent. He says that in such instances loud dhikr is definitely not permissible. There was a person who used to engage in so loud dhikr at the time of tahajjud that his voice used to carry to the entire neighbourhood. Hadrat Wālā emphatically prohibited him. Similarly, an elderly seeker wrote: "Sometimes because of

people who are sleeping nearby and sometimes in order to remove my fatigue, I engage in silent dhikr instead of loud dhikr. Is there any harm in this?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is no harm in it. In fact, it is superior and more beneficial."

Do not confine to dhikr with the heart

However, Hadrat Wālā did not confine to dhikr with the heart because it causes absent-mindedness in most cases, while the seeker is deceived into thinking that he is engaged in dhikr with the heart. A seeker had wrote to Hadrat Wālā about his interest in dhikr with the heart. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Do not confine yourself to dhikr with the heart. Dhikr with the tongue is also necessary – even if it causes a decrease in dhikr with the heart."

Hadrat Wālā explains the wisdom behind this: "When dhikr with the heart is accompanied by dhikr with the tongue, the advantage of it is that if a person loses interest in dhikr with the heart – as it happens quite often – and he stops making dhikr with it, then at least the tongue will be continuing in dhikr and occupied in worship. On the other hand, if a person engages in dhikr with the heart alone and then loses interest in it, neither will the heart nor the tongue be engaged in dhikr. The tongue had not been engaged since before, and now the heart too is not engaged in it. In short, a person's time will pass in absolute heedlessness without even realizing it."

Continuity in dhikr

Before prescribing any dhikr, Hadrat Wālā would first inquire about the seeker's present spiritual practices. If any of his practice – whether in deed or in belief – is against the Sharīʿah, he would ask him to give it up. However, he asks him to continue doing the remainder because the best of deeds are those which are done with continuity. Continuity creates blessings.

There was a time in my life when I did not have sufficient time. I asked Hadrat Wālā about leaving out the different forms of dhikr which are normally read after the five salāhs. He replied: "No, no, you must not leave them. They are extremely blessed. Do not consider them insignificant merely because they are so concise."

Apart from the blessings, Hadrat Wālā says that a seeker is more enthusiastic about continuing with previous forms of dhikr. Since he is more enthusiastic about them, they will be easier for him to carry out and he will fulfil them with concentration and continuity. This will be most beneficial to him as opposed to new forms of dhikr. It is therefore to a seeker's advantage to maintain the previous forms of dhikr. However, if a seeker's previous forms of dhikr are so many that he will not be able to carry out the spiritual practices which are prescribed by the spiritual masters – practices which would be more helpful to a person to create firmness in dhikr – Hadrat Wālā would reduce his previous forms of dhikr to ten percent of the original. In this way, the seeker will be carrying out one tenth but still reaping the full reward – in the light of the verse: "The one who does a single good deed shall be rewarded ten times the like thereof." Hadrat Wālā says that at least the person will receive his rewards, I do not like to remove it completely.

Consideration to the seeker when prescribing the amount of dhikr

Hadrat Wālā prescribes to a seeker a form of dhikr which is most appropriate to the seeker at that particular time, in that specific condition, and a form with which he has affinity and is most enthusiastic about. Based on the specific condition of a seeker, Hadrat Wālā considers the dhikr which he prescribed for him to be most beneficial. Instead of prescribing dhikr for a particular person, he prescribed excessive recitation of the Qur'ān for him. The man was overjoyed and said: "I am deeply in love with reciting the Qur'ān." For another person, Hadrat Wālā prescribed excessive optional salāhs. The man displayed his intense attachment to it. If a person becomes bored with and experiences boredom from excessive dhikr and lengthy periods of solitude, Hadrat Wālā advises him to undertake a journey for a few days. He must go around meeting his friends and relatives and occupy himself in lawful activities. He must go back into solitude once he regains his enthusiasm and zest. Anyway, he prohibits the seekers from giving up lawful activities totally. This was explained in detail previously.

Spiritual practices must not be missed out

Hadrat Wālā emphasises the completion of spiritual practices even if they are done without ablution – where there is an excuse for this – or done while walking and moving about. The

reason for this is that it is most unblessed to miss out after having laid down and established a practice. This is also emphasised in a Hadīth. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

يا عبد الله لا تكن مثل فلان كان يصلي بالليل ثم تركه

O ʿAbdullāh! Do not be like such and such person who used to perform optional salāh at night and then gave it up.

Missing out spiritual practices is similar to a person who establishes a bond with his ruler. He starts frequenting him, becomes closely attached to him, but then stops going to him altogether. The ruler will be very offended. As for the one who does not establish a special bond, there can be no complaint against him provided he establishes a bond in absentia with his shaykh, for it is essential.

Concession to students

Generally Hadrat Wālā would not instruct students of Dīn to occupy themselves in dhikr for this may interfere with their studies. Apart from dhikr taking away their time, seekers become so attached to dhikr that their interest in studying diminishes. However, since rectification of one's deeds is compulsory under all conditions and it does not interfere with one's time – in fact, a person saves time because he gives up futile activities – Hadrat Wālā permits students to correspond with him. He even goes to the extent of advising them to write to him. When my son was busy studying, Hadrat Wālā said to him with real affection and feeling: "You must write to me periodically and inform me of the faults which you perceive within yourself. Allāh willing, I will show you simple and easy procedures which will be very easy for you to follow. What can be more easier than this: I permit you to not even act on my words of advice. However, you must continually seek my advice on matters concerning your rectification. Allāh willing, you will see that even this will be very beneficial to you."

This discussion has prolonged and I do not even intend covering all aspects. I am therefore concluding this point.

Developing the quality of self-obliteration

Hadrat Wālā constantly says with much emphasis: "Self-obliteration is the first step in this path. The person in whom

this quality has not developed must understand that he does not have even a whiff of the path. The spiritual masters say that self-obliteration is the final step in this path. This is also absolutely correct. It refers to perfection in self-obliteration because there are, after all, different levels of self-obliteration."

A well-known Nadwī scholar happened to spend a few hours in Hadrat Wālā's company. When he was departing, he asked Hadrat Wālā for some advice. Hadrat Wālā relates: "I was hesitant in saying anything because he was such an erudite scholar, what advice could I give him? Allāh *taʿālā* then instilled a certain theme in my heart which I later learnt was most appropriate to his situation. I said to him: 'Hadrat! What advice can I give to a senior person like you! However, I will present to you the essence of the path which I deduced from my life-long experience. The essence which I deduced is known as self-obliteration and servitude. As far as possible, continue obliterating yourself. All spiritual exercises and strivings are done with this purpose. One's entire life must be spent in acquiring self-obliteration and servitude.' He was so much affected by these words that tears flowed from his eyes. And rightly so because this is a quality which all the spiritual masters have been teaching through the generations. This is especially so among the Chishtī spiritual masters."

Two golden principles with regard to emptying and embellishing one's self

Two golden principles of Hadrat Wālā are presented here. One is with regard to emptying one's self and the other is with regard to embellishing one's self. However, there is a common denominator between the two, viz. imposing on one's self to practice. As regards the first point, a seeker wrote: "I find it very difficult on myself to abstain from casting evil glances. Kindly show me a way which, if I practise on it, I will develop a natural aversion to this despicable action."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is no way apart from courage and bearing hardships. There are two factors which will assist you, viz. consciousness of punishment and excessive dhikr."

As regards embellishing one's self, a seeker wrote: "Kindly show me a way of acquiring conviction."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Impose on yourself to do good deeds. The blessings of this imposition will create conviction. There is no other way."

In short, Hadrat Wālā attaches a lot of importance to imposing actions on one's self. He quotes the following couplets of Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* a lot:

> Continue digging in this path, do not take a rest for even a single moment.
>
> So that even in your final moment you will be striving and the kindness of Allāh *ta'ālā* may be on you.
>
> The Beloved loves this worry and concern on your part. Even a fruitless effort is better than sleeping [doing nothing].
>
> Do something or the other. Do not be lazy. Continue scratching and scraping a little soil at a time.
>
> When you continue removing a little soil daily from the hole, you will eventually reach a point where you will find pure water.
>
> If you sit at the entrance of an alley, you will certainly see someone's face.

Hadrat Wālā also quotes the following couplets quite often:

> I do not withdraw my hand from seeking so that I may acquire my objective. I will continue seeking until my body reaches the Beloved or my life leaves my body.
>
> Whether I find Him or not, I will continue searching. Whether I acquire or not, I should at least have hopes of acquiring.
>
> Continue striving. Go beyond mere words. This path needs striving and nothing else.
>
> The path needs action not claims, because claims without actions are of no essence.

A complete way of rectification

I now conclude this second section related to teaching and training with a most beneficial and complete course of action. Hadrat Wālā prescribed it just recently for a new Muslim who is a genuine seeker. This course is of such a nature that every seeker can adopt it as his own course of action. The seeker's

letter together with Hadrat Wālā's replies are quoted from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.

> Condition: I have a serious illness, viz. when I wish to write a letter to Hadrat Wālā, I do not know what to write. When I look at my evils and intend writing to Hadrat Wālā so that I may be rectified, I get occupied in thinking about which evil I should write about first. My preoccupation in thinking about this results in leaving out writing altogether. Then when I decide on writing about a particular evil, I think to myself that if I put my mind to it, I can give it up. I should therefore try to give it up first by myself. If I am unsuccessful, I will write to Hadrat Wālā. I become so engrossed in all these thoughts that writing to Hadrat Wālā gets left completely, and the evils remain within me as they always had been there. I try my utmost but do not succeed. The stronger the resolution I make, the quicker it breaks. I am therefore confused and concerned about how my rectification will be realized when I cannot even be steadfast on a particular matter. I now request Hadrat Wālā to be so kind as to prescribe a treatment for me. I also request Hadrat Wālā's prayers so that I may gain salvation from all evils.

> Reply: The treatment for it is this: You must take a page and list all your evils. As you remember other evils, add to this list. You must also continue treating them. The evils which are completely uprooted after treating them must be removed from the list. Those that remain – whether totally or partially – leave them on the list. Then when you sit down to write to me, draw a lot in order to specify one particular evil. Write to me about the one in whose favour the lot falls. If you have treated it partially, mention that in your letter as well. In this way, there will be no confusion when you sit down to write to me. I am also praying for you. Was salām.

A seeker's letter and its reply

A seeker wrote that he requests Hadrat Wālā to teach him how to rectify his deeds. As per his habit, Hadrat Wālā asked the

seeker to explain the meaning of rectification of deeds. He wrote back as follows:

> Sometimes I become lazy in carrying out the pillars of Islam. Even if I take the courage to carry out some of them, I experience no peace and concentration whatsoever. I am totally devoid of the happiness and joy which a person is supposed to experience when worshipping Allāh *taʿālā*. Furthermore, I experience certain impediments and obstacles in acquiring the sciences of the Sharīʿah and in my occupation with the different branches of Dīn which cause a constriction in my heart and mind. I therefore beg Hadrat Wālā to check the above-mentioned ailments, provide a treatment for them and make it easy for me to follow the Sharīʿah.

Hadrat Wālā then addressed those who were present by saying: "Look! People are concerned about matters which are beyond their control. They want Allāh *taʿālā* to confer all these things to them, but who can take such a responsibility? They do not want to bear any burden at all whereas this path contains 'chickpeas of steel' which they have to chew on for the rest of their lives."

The story of a lawyer

A lawyer wrote a lengthy life story in which he mentioned that he became a murīd of an ignorant man of expositions who previously led a life of a mad-man. The man then became engrossed in worldly matters and stopped the lawyer from acquiring knowledge of jurisprudence. This is why he severed his ties with the man. The lawyer described some of the conditions which he experienced during the period when he was aligned to the man, and also about some of the conditions which he experienced due to simāʿ and so on. He also wrote about his deep interest in Hadrat Wālā's written works and the fact that he severed ties from the above-mentioned man since the last two years. He added: "I feel myself inclined towards you and have developed a deep bond with your thoughts and lectures. I earnestly request you to advise me on what to do for the future."

It was a very long story to which Hadrat Wālā replied in a unique manner. He wrote: "A person asked a hunch-backed

man: 'Would you like to be cured or would you like others to become hunch-backed as well?' He replied: 'I would like others to become hunch-backed so that I could laugh at them just as they laugh at me.' This is my example – I am merely a student who would like to take others through the same course which I am studying. You must have gauged my advice from this. You must now think about an advice for yourself."

Short and concise speech

"When it comes to the path [of Sufism], I am very particular about speaking concisely but comprehensively. Consequently, I prescribed a treatment for bad character in two words: "forethought and forbearance". In other words, before doing anything, think whether it is lawful in the Sharīʿah or not. Secondly, do not hasten, be forbearing. These two words are concise and also rhyme (the Urdu is *ta'ammul wa tahammul*). It makes it easy to remember them. A friend said to me that this is prose in the form of poetry."

Abstain from interfering in other people's affairs

"It is not my habit to interfere in any matter. I am overwhelmed by bashfulness so I do not desire to meddle in any matter on my own accord. I think to myself: 'It has nothing to do with me, why should I interfere?' If a person needs to consult with me a hundred thousand times as regards his rectification, he is free to do so. But if a person has no concern for his rectification, why should I run after him? If I am ever overcome by affection, I will draw his attention to it in a soft manner."

Faith and love

Maulānā said: "I prefer love to faith [in a person] because faith is based on one's thoughts and it could be removed very easily. On the other hand, love does not get wiped out."

Etiquette before bay'ah

"I asked a few questions to a person. He was unnecessarily lazy and delayed in answering them. He answered one question after the other after a very long pause. He then requested bayʿah to me. I said: You must first learn etiquette and manners, and then request bayʿah. You still do not have any manners – a person asked you questions and you inconvenienced him by making him wait for your answers."

Rectification of deeds before dhikr and spiritual practices

"When a person is engaged in dhikr and other spiritual practices, I do not value him until I see his deeds coming right. There is enjoyment in dhikr, a person can die if he does not do it. On the other hand, deeds are those in which there is a burden and a person still does them to acquire Allāh's pleasure. Similarly, a person must be prepared to bear difficulties while fulfilling the rights of others." A person who was engrossed in dhikr incurred some debts and was very lax in paying them. Hadrat Wālā made the above statement on that occasion and expelled him saying: "You can only come here after you pay off your debts. You cannot come here until you pay off your debts."

A habitual defaulter is not pardoned

Hadrat Wālā said: "When I learn that a person is in the habit of committing a certain mistake, I do not feel like pardoning him until he gets rid off it. If a person commits a mistake occasionally, there is no objection to pardoning him. I never want to keep a person who tramples on the rights of others."

Manners and integrity are more important than education

"I do not pay so much of attention to teaching and educating as I do to manners, character and integrity. Attention to teaching and educating is given everywhere, but no one bothers about character. For example, I do not look too much at who performed salāh with congregation and who did not because, firstly, a person could have a valid excuse. Secondly, not performing it with congregation affects the person himself and not others. On the other hand, if a person does something unmannerly, I take him to task to the full because it inconveniences others."

Preparation before bay'ah

Hadrat Wālā said: "When a person requests bay'ah, I first write a list of books which he must read, especially my lectures because I find a lot of benefit in doing this. If a person writes to me and says that he has already studied the books, I ask him: 'What changes did you make to your condition after studying them?' The benefit of this is that what can be achieved in this short while is not normally achieved over many years. I put the person to work from the very first day, but people do not value

it. The fundamental thing is concern. When man has a concern, he seeks a way out. I therefore place a weight on the seeker's head in my first conversation with him or in my first letter to him. This creates a concern in him, and the concern automatically lays open the path before him."

Principles Related To Correspondence

Different themes are not to be written in the same letter

Hadrat Wālā does not tolerate several themes in a single letter. For example, juridical rulings and issues related to Sufism being asked in the same letter. Since juridical rulings are more important and it is necessary to hasten in replying to them, he writes answers to them only, provided he does not have to refer to any books in order to find an answer. Most of the time, Hadrat Wālā does not have the time to refer to books. With reference to the questions on Sufism, he would say to the person: "You must write a separate letter and ask me those questions." Sometimes, in order to reprimand the person, he does not reply at all.

The wisdom behind this prohibition

The wisdom behind not permitting the combination of juridical rulings and Sufi issues in a single letter is that it is distracting and one cannot gauge which is the real issue at hand which needs an answer. Furthermore, there is also the possibility of mixing up issues for both parties. This is a matter which has to be avoided. In addition to this, it takes up a lot of time. The large number of letters which Hadrat Wālā receives and his many other preoccupations do not leave him with enough time.

A person who would like to fulfil the duty of serving Allāh's creation and to see to the needs of all needy persons will have no alternative but to lay down restrictions of this nature. If not, efforts to please everyone may result in not pleasing anyone at all. Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "If I were to sit down and devote myself to just one task, all other tasks and responsibilities will be left by the side. I prefer doing a little of everything for everyone because they all have rights."

Questions must be posed in a good mannered way

Hadrat Wālā also says in this regard: "People send lengthy letters and ask me to reply to them. I write back and tell them: I do not have so much of time to reply to all your questions at

once. You should rather identify those questions for which you need an answer. Then write just one question in one letter and send it to me. Once you receive its answer – whether in one letter or over several letters – send me the next question and obtain its answer. In this way, you can continue sending me your questions one after the other. You can then collate all the answers and publish them if you like."

Hadrat Wālā says: "I have no objection to serving people provided the service is requested in a proper manner and I am only asked what is in my line of work. If a person can do some of it himself, he must do it; he must not place the entire burden on me. In this way, even if a person were to take services from me for his entire life, I will be most happy to carry them out. After all, it is my work to serve my fellow Muslims as much as I can and however I can."

Hadrat Wālā continues: "It is very easy for people to place their burdens on others, but when they themselves are asked to do something, they sit back. I explained the above procedure to many people but because they themselves had to do something, they remained seated. However, after this announcement, one person asked me for an answer to just one question, and then he too gave up and sat back. He wanted answers to some of the misgivings about the Bahā'ī sect. I wrote to him and said the same thing to him: Send me one question at a time and attribute the question to yourself, not to someone else because I cannot address someone who is absent."

"Subsequently, he wrote one question and sent it to me. I answered his question and made up my mind to continue this correspondence. I even had this answer copied separately so that future answers could be added to this one. But that person only wrote this one letter and could not be disciplined enough to continue writing."

A request to be excluded from the prohibition of one subject per letter

One of Hadrat Wālā's principles as mentioned above was that only one subject must be written in a letter. Some people wrote to him and requested that they be excluded from this rule because they are poor and do not have the money to keep on writing. Hadrat Wālā replied: "If am going to start making exceptions to this rule, how will I remember to whom this

exception was made? Moreover, if these exceptions are accepted, the rules and principles will no longer remain rules. Furthermore, when will the reason behind which the rule was laid down be fulfilled? Therefore, I cannot accept this request. However, if you are really in need, you may make a collection specifically for this purpose, and I too will be most pleased to join in this regard."

I [the compiler] say: Some people did exactly as told and Hadrat Wālā joined them very happily. Consequently, there are still some people whom Hadrat Wālā assists for this purpose. He is prepared to do this, but he will never tolerate people breaking his rules and principles."

The letter must not be pretentious

Hadrat Wālā disapproves of pretentiousness in writing because it can cause more confusion and the real feelings of the writer cannot be gauged correctly. Hadrat Wālā was especially particular about prohibiting the seekers of the spiritual path from doing this. If anyone writes in Arabic merely to show off his abilities, Hadrat Wālā would reply in Urdu. He would write: "I cannot write Arabic so freely, while you can. You are therefore better than me. A better person must not revert to one who is lesser than him. You should therefore revert to someone who is more capable than me."

A reply to a person who wrote in Arabic

Incidentally, Hadrat Wālā received a letter in Arabic. His reply is quoted verbatim. He wrote: "A prerequisite for one to benefit from another is for the one who is conveying benefits must be better than the one who is seeking them. You are writing in Arabic – although you are writing incorrectly and I do not write incorrectly – so you are therefore better. The above-mentioned prerequisite is therefore not found. Thus, you cannot benefit from me."

Another person sought permission to write in Arabic and gave his reason that it is the language of the people of Paradise. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Take an oath and write to me and say that if you come here you will speak only in Arabic." The man could not give any sound reply.

The above replies are only given to those who write unnecessarily in Arabic. Where there is a genuine reason, e.g.

someone who writes from the Arab lands, then Hadrat Wālā makes it a point to reply in Arabic.

When Hadrat Wālā says to those who write to him in Arabic to revert to someone better than himself, those same people start writing in Urdu. In fact, some of them frankly admit that they had written in Arabic solely to display their abilities. Hadrat Wālā also stops the seekers from writing poetry. He says that it is uncultured and disrespectful to write poetry and quote it before one whom you consider to be your senior. However, he excuses those who are overcome by their spiritual conditions. Hadrat Wālā also stops those who go to extremes in using many titles of respect and honour.

Replies to a lawyer's letters

Just recently, a new seeker who studied Western education and is a senior lawyer wrote in a letter to Hadrat Wālā and referred to himself as a low slave in the court of Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā replied in such a comprehensive and subtle manner that the person had no alternative but to accept what he said. Hadrat Wālā wrote: "If I develop pride from such words, my illness increases. If I was humbled by them, I feel restricted. In both cases, there is physical or spiritual harm."

The lawyer expressed his sorrow at losing his previous letter which he had written to Hadrat Wālā with utmost enthusiasm. The man considered it his misfortune. Hadrat Wālā drew his attention by saying: "I do not consider it good for a Muslim to admit his misfortune. A Muslim is never unfortunate. For example, as regards this very incident wherein you lost your letter and you felt grieved. You were rewarded for it. Now is this misfortune or good fortune? However, evils which are committed voluntarily could be referred to as losses."

The same lawyer had also written: "Hadrat! Train and tutor this immature and untrained person." Hadrat Wālā replied: "Training can only be done by senior persons. A worthless person like myself is in need of training himself. How can I train others? However, I cannot refuse to serve anyone when I am asked to serve in the path."

He also wrote: "I feel intimidated when I am in your presence, and when I am away from you and sit down to write to you, my pen trembles." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Do not even allow such thoughts to come into your heart. You may write to your

heart's desire whatever comes to your mind and without consideration of any rules and regulations. There are just two or three points which need to be considered. I referred to it as the path above. The first point is that the incident which you wish to relate must be written clearly. Do not resort to flowery language. Secondly, do not allow the letter to be unnecessarily long. Thirdly, a single letter must not contain more than one subject matter. But if there is a link between several matters, they will be counted as one."

Replies to a person using vague words

Sometimes a person may present his request in vague words. For example, accept me in slavery, cover me under your wing, turn your gaze of attention towards me, etc. etc. Hadrat Wālā will reply: "Leave these vague words and write clearly what you really want." Similarly, if a seeker writes: Undertake my rectification, steer and guide me, show me the way to Allāh or any other similar request, Hadrat Wālā writes back: "Write an explanation to what you are saying." He does this so that if the person misunderstood the actual import of these words, he could explain them to him. In short, Hadrat Wālā does not initiate a programme of training as long as the objective is not clearly delineated. If a seeker considers a non-objective to be his objective despite Hadrat Wālā drawing his attention to this, he excuses himself from training and tutoring the person. Hadrat Wālā would write to such a person: "I do not consider it to be the objective and purpose in Dīn. If this is what you consider it to be, revert to someone else because I do not know how to acquire and realize this objective of yours."

A reply to a doctor's letter

There was a learned doctor who belonged to another spiritual lineage. He had misunderstood the correct meaning of the verse:

اَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ

Listen! In the remembrance of Allāh lies the tranquillity of the hearts.

The doctor repeatedly asked Hadrat Wālā about the means of acquiring tranquillity of the heart and Hadrat Wālā repeatedly explained to him – in his unique way of teaching a person – that this was not the objective. When the doctor persisted,

Hadrat Wālā wrote the same reply as quoted above. After answering his questions which he posed in one of his letters, Hadrat Wālā replied to his final request as follows: "All the preludes which you mentioned are questionable. So how can such claims be made. However, I do not like to enter into long drawn out discussions on this subject. If – according to you – all claims are correct and such tranquillity of heart is the objective in Dīn, then my final answer is that I do not know the prescription for it. You must revert to some other physician."

The doctor realized his folly and wrote back:

> Respect Hadrat! May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to benefit from your continued existence and may He continue showering your blessings on us. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. I felt honoured and blessed to receive your letter. I re-read my past letters and the present letter very carefully and realized my incorrect views. The reality was exposed to me and I was blessed by Hadrat's attention. Indeed, goodness is not dependent on natural tranquillity (and it only needs knowledge and capability), nor can such tranquillity be an objective in Dīn. Hadrat's replies which were comprehensive but subtle warnings and guidelines proved to be most beneficial to me. Allāh willing, they will be of use to me in the future as well."

Hadrat Wālā expressed his happiness and wrote back: "May knowledge do you a lot of good."

Letters which did not come with self-addressed reply envelops

Apart from a few special persons, Hadrat Wālā abstained from replying to a letter which did not include a self-addressed reply envelop. He did this because receiving a reply rests with the one who asks for a reply; not the one who gives the reply. Hadrat Wālā himself is very strict in observing this rule. Even when he has to write to one of his attendants for some work, he will certainly include a reply envelop. He says: "Since it is my work, why should I place the burden of paying for the postage on him?" Although most of his attendants pay for the postage from their side and send the reply, and return Hadrat Wālā's stamped postcard or envelop, Hadrat Wālā never places this burden on them from his side.

Replying to letters without any delay

Hadrat Wālā is extremely particular about replying to letters without any delay. Rarely will you find someone who is so particular in this regard. Those who correspond with him are able to calculate when they will receive their replies. If there is a delay because of the postal system or some other reason, and they therefore did not receive it on the expected day, they would become doubtful and worried [about Hadrat Wālā's health]. Consequently, some of them would assume that Hadrat Wālā is unwell and would immediately write another letter to inquire about his health. Most of the time, I personally saw Hadrat Wālā receiving fifty letters a day, and most of them used to be quite lengthy. Despite this, Hadrat Wālā replies to all of them on the same day even if it means sitting with them between the ʿasr and maghrib salāhs, maghrib and ʿishā salāhs or even after the ʿishā salāh.

When Hadrat Wālā used to be on a journey, he would receive several days' letters all at once. I myself saw him not sleeping at night until he replied to a reasonable number. In fact, I even saw him returning from a lecture in the middle of the night and then replying to letters despite having a severe headache. He would massage his head and continue replying to the letters. If anyone said to him: "Hadrat! Take a rest now, you can reply to the letters in the morning", Hadrat Wālā would reply: "I have such a demanding temperament that even if I were to leave my work aside and go to sleep, I would not fall asleep. Why, then, should I not just continue with the work?"

Adhering to a strict timetable

Hadrat Wālā's strict adherence to times and ensuring that the day's work is completed in that day have left many people of the courts astounded. They had to acknowledge that no person can carry out so much and so intense mental work by day and night without the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and without spiritual strength. This does not apply to just a few days, rather Hadrat Wālā's entire life was spent in this manner. By the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, he is able to accomplish this same feat even during his present time of weakness and old-age. People are left astounded when they see him after maghrib, after ʿishā, and before fajr with a lantern; and also from after ʿasr to maghrib imposing on his eyes to continue reading and carrying out his writing work.

Without exaggeration, he appears like a machine which is receiving an electric current from the unseen and working tirelessly day and night. This is from the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless Hadrat Wālā with complete and eternal good health and wellbeing, general and perfect blessings, and an extraordinary long life. Āmīn.

Letters are arranged according to rank

The moment Hadrat Wālā receives his post, he devotes his time to it. Letters from special associates are kept one side so that they could be answered first. This distribution is based on recognition of the letters. Thereafter, after reading through the others superficially, he keeps aside those whose subject matter deserves special attention. Letters which require contemplation, are long or there is a need to refer to books before replying to them are generally left aside to be seen in the morning when he is relatively more free and not very occupied. Letters which contain unacceptable subject matter are replied to immediately and sent off to the post office before time. He says with regard to them: "I am discomforted by even having such letters near me."

Replies to those asking for fatwās

Due to his present old age and lack of time, Hadrat Wālā excuses himself – except in special circumstances – from replying to letters which require referring to books and additional research. He replies to such letters as follows: "I neither have the time nor the strength to refer to books. You may ask your question to someone else."

Some people persisted and said: "We are satisfied only by Hadrat Wālā's fatwās." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "You can get your satisfaction by sending me the replies which you obtained from elsewhere and asking me to sanction them." It has been some time since Hadrat Wālā is gradually passing on his Dīnī services to others. As for replying to fatwās, this he has reduced tremendously. Only special cases are attended to. This was explained in detail in the previous section. He also hands over seekers to his khulafā'. He explained the wisdom behind this on one occasion: "It is certainly most inappropriate for several Dīnī services to be carried out by just one person because man has to experience life and death. When such a

person passes away, so many Dīnī services will terminate. Even this may be for just a few days, it will have an effect on Dīn, or – at least – people in need will remain confused for a few days."

He also said on another occasion: "I distribute Dīnī tasks among several people because I do not want anyone to be traumatized by my death. People will think that so many Dīnī services have now come to an end. I cannot bear to see Muslims suffering even to the extent of expressing sorrow at my demise. This, notwithstanding the fact that putting an end to natural sorrow is beyond my control."

In short, Hadrat Wālā must never be troubled to do such tasks which can be accomplished elsewhere. Now, only letters concerning rectification of deeds may be written to him because this service is not rendered anywhere else on such a level of importance and with such a unique system. Although Hadrat Wālā says that this service is minor in comparison to other services, it is also essential. For example, the large madāris do not teach the primers and alphabets. Large important books are taught there. A small maktab where the primers and alphabets are taught are not considered important. However, if at any time, only the large madāris remain, there will be a need for small makātib to be established so that the primers and alphabets could be taught there.

Prerequisites for replying to letters from women

Based on several underlying wisdoms and reasons, Hadrat Wālā does not reply to any letter from a woman if it is not signed by her husband or mahram. Hadrat Wālā even informed a high-ranking woman who was a principal in a college of this prerequisite. She too had her letter signed by her husband and then sent to him. Close family women are excluded from this.

Attention is paid to comparing the copy to the original

If a person writes to Hadrat Wālā and makes reference to Hadrat Wālā's reply in a previous letter, Hadrat Wālā does not reply to the new letter until he asks for the previous one and checks if it is as claimed. He does not consider a copy to be sufficient because people are generally not particular about relating the entire previous episode. In such instances, Hadrat Wālā writes to the person: "Send my first letter exactly as it is."

If there are several letters of this nature, he instructs the person to arrange them in order and to number them in sequence. However, Hadrat Wālā dislikes such letters to be pinned or tied [stapled] together because he will have to read them all at once and reply to them – all of which requires time and causes discomfort. Easiness lies in having all the letters separate and numbered so that Hadrat Wālā could pick whichever one he wishes to read and reply to it easily. Pinning letters poses the added danger of getting poked. This happened to Hadrat Wālā on several occasions and caused him a lot of discomfort.

Asking for a previous letter does not mean that the writer must not write anything about it. Rather, the matter which he is referring to must be quoted in full in the present letter. The previous letter is only asked for because if the quoted text of the writer is insufficient to fully comprehend what he is saying, then Hadrat Wālā could at least refer to the previous letter. It does not mean that the writer must merely make reference to the previous matter and absolve himself in this way, while Hadrat Wālā has to search for the matter which he is referring to and take the pains of reading it and understanding it.

Hadrat Wālā wrote to a seeker who made the above mistake: "It is against my principles for a person to send two previous letters with the present new letter. Just one previous letter may be sent with the present one. Furthermore, the new letter must contain the complete quotation from the previous one. The previous letter is requested merely as a precaution. I do not have a lot of time, therefore a lot of consideration must be given to providing ease to me."

Replies are written on the very same letter of the seeker

When replying to any matter, Hadrat Wālā draws a line from the matter under discussion and writes his reply in the margin. He continues doing this until the end of the letter. This is done so that the matter under discussion together with its reply may be before the person at one glance and he will be able to understand the reply properly. Hadrat Wālā has therefore laid down this instruction that half or at least one third of each page of a letter must be left blank so that he could write his replies there. The wisdom behind this is so that the subject and its reply remain together. Where there is a need for a correlation between the subject and Hadrat Wālā's reply, he

does not write anything on a post card. Instead, he writes to the person and informs him that a post card cannot suffice such matters. At the same time, Hadrat Wālā does not store such letters while waiting for the person to write back, or else, he will have to contend with safekeeping heaps and heaps of letters. Some people of little understanding respond to this request of Hadrat Wālā by merely posting an envelop to him. Hadrat Wālā then has to write back and ask them for the original subject matter. In such cases, he writes as follows: "Where is the original subject matter for which you require answers? Do you think I have kept it safely with me? You have no right to think in this manner because it is not my responsibility to safeguard your letters in any specific way."

Based on the above wisdoms, Hadrat Wālā writes his replies on the original letter of the seeker. But if the person writes his own reply on Hadrat Wālā's replies and then sends it back to him, Hadrat Wālā emphatically prohibits this. There are two reasons for this: (1) It could cause confusion. (2) It is ill-mannered to write a reply on the written words of one's senior. Hadrat Wālā writes to such a person: "When you consider a person to be your senior – even though he is not – it is ill-mannered to write a reply over his writing."

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to teaching people to show respect to him: "The reason for this is not that I consider myself to be worthy of respect or that I want people to show respect to me. Allāh forbid. What am I that I have a right to respect?! The reason for my disapproval of this absence of respect is that when a person believes that a particular person is respectable and honourable, why does he not fulfil the rights of what he believes? Why does he treat him in a manner which contradicts his belief? If it were not for this reason, I find myself most ashamed to teach people on how to interact with others, but what can I do, I have to tell them with a view to rectify them."

A few matters which cause distress

When certain matters are not taken into consideration, they cause extreme distress to Hadrat Wālā. A few examples will be given here and we will then terminate this section. Those who write letters must pay special attention to these points.

Sending a stamp instead of a self-addressed and stamped envelop

Instead of merely sending a stamp [to cover the postage], those who write to Hadrat Wālā must send an envelop or post card which contains the person's full name and address in clear legible words. The stamp must also be pasted by the person. If it is a hand-made envelop, three sides must be sealed. In fact, it would be better to apply glue to the fourth side and left to dry so that when Hadrat Wālā replies, all he has to do is write his reply, place it inside the envelop and seal it. If this is not done, those who are present here can see the acute discomfort and distress which it causes to Hadrat Wālā. The reason for this is that if a stamp is merely placed in the envelop, then although great care is taken to open the envelop, the stamp falls off quite often. Sometimes, Hadrat Wālā keeps the stamps aside with a view to sticking them later on, but because of the many letters which he receives and his various other occupations, he forgets where he placed those stamps.

In any case, searching for the stamps causes a lot of distress and a lot of time is wasted. Sometimes when Hadrat Wālā sees a fallen stamp, he has to open all the letters to check from which one it fell off. If he is unable to identify which letter if fell off from, then as per his practice, he will keep it in safe custody for one month. If he still does not identify whose stamp it is, he gives it away in charity. Sometimes, he finds two letters without a stamp, and since he does not know to which envelop the stamp which he found belongs, he sticks the stamp to one of the envelops and sticks another one to the other envelop at his cost. Another harm of not sticking the stamps on the envelopes from before hand is that sometimes the stamps do not have enough glue, and so, they do not stick properly. Consequently, it happens quite often that the stamp falls off after Hadrat Wālā sticks it. The stamp is then found separated, and Hadrat Wālā has to search through the entire stack to check from which envelope it fell off.

However, there is an advantage of not sticking the stamp by one's self and leaving it to Hadrat Wālā. The advantage of it is that the stamp can be stuck on the side where the envelope is sealed. In this way, the envelope remains intact and does not open in the post. Another way of doing this is for half the stamp to be stuck on the side where the envelope is to be sealed while the other half is left sticking out. In this way, the

stamp will not fall off and it will also be easy for Hadrat Wālā to seal the envelope. Just this week a person sent a hand-made envelope with all the sides open and none of them having any glue. Neither was the stamp pasted. In order to serve as a reprimand, Hadrat Wālā left the sides open as they had been, but tied a small length of cotton to prevent the letter from falling out. To sum up, Hadrat Wālā is very discomforted by all these shortcomings and failings.

When a self-addressed envelope is not sent

In the same way, Hadrat Wālā is severely disturbed when a self-addressed envelope is not sent. He considers it essential for the writer to personally write his address on the return envelope so that there is no possibility of error or in copying the address. If the address was written incorrectly or illegibly by the writer himself, he will be at fault if the letter does not reach him. It will not cause any grief to Hadrat Wālā. Some time back, a letter was returned to Hadrat Wālā because it was incorrectly addressed. He said: "Look at how much sorrow it would have caused me had it been written by myself."

Based on these reasons, if Hadrat Wālā receives a letter without a self-addressed envelope in it, he places the letter of the writer in such a manner that his address which is normally written at the head of the letter is visible from the envelope. He then sticks this protruding portion from the outside along the edge of the envelope. In this way, the letter will not move about and the person's address will be visible. If there is a possibility of it not sticking properly because of a lack of space and the letter separating from its envelope along the way, or the possibility of the letter getting torn when trying to remove it from the envelope, Hadrat Wālā stitches the address with a fine string. He then places the letter into the envelope, and the surrounding writing which is visible after sticking or stitching the address is scratched off. In this way, only the address is visible and the postman will be able to read it easily. If a person only sends a stamp without a self-addressed envelope, Hadrat Wālā places the letter as described above, pastes the stamp on the letter itself and posts it.

From all the above, the reader must have realized the extent of importance Hadrat Wālā attached to the fulfilment of his principles. Neither must the people of the postal system be inconvenienced, there must be no possibility of the letter

getting lost, nor should the recipient of the letter be inconvenienced in any way. This, despite the fact that the original sender – due to his failings – was not even deserving of such concessions.

A lot of Hadrat Wālā's time is taken away in seeing to all these matters and he has to bear a lot of inconvenience. Although he does not like to waste a single minute of his and can never tolerate wasting his time in unnecessary matters, he does all this with absolute calmness bearing a lot of fatigue because of a need to do it and the wisdom behind doing it. Those who are seated nearby and observe him become agitated, however, since Hadrat Wālā's blessed temperament – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – is very principled, the severest of discomforts and fatigue do not vex him where there is a real need. But where there is no need, he cannot tolerate the slightest fatigue.

A practical disciplining of those who disobey

The following incident occurred just this week. Hadrat Wālā was cutting and trimming an envelope as described previously when – coincidentally – the principle of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband was present. On observing Hadrat Wālā's entire procedure, he said: "This entire procedure is far more time consuming than writing the address yourself." Hadrat Wālā replied: "There is wisdom behind this. I do it so that the person who sent the letter will at least realize how much inconvenience he put me through because of his action, he will not do this in future, and it will serve as a practical disciplining forever."

In addition to this practical disciplining, Hadrat Wālā explicitly writes on the envelope: "Had you sent a self-addressed envelope, I would not have to bear this inconvenience." As a way of reprimand, he would return some people's letters without even writing a reply. He writes: "The time which it would have taken me to reply to your letter was spent in pasting your address and writing a warning note to you. I now have other letters to reply to. This is why I am sending your letter without replying to it." In this way, it serves as a life-long lesson for the writer, and he will never repeat such an action.

When an envelope is too narrow

Some people seal the envelopes in such a manner that it becomes extremely difficult to open it. Sometimes, the letter inside gets torn. Similarly, some writers make very narrow

envelopes or fold the letter in such a way that there is no place to open the envelope at the top. Apart from time getting wasted, there are times when the letter gets torn.

When a stamp is doubtful

Those who send a stamp to be used for the reply envelope must ensure that it is absolutely clear, not dirty, marked, torn or in any other doubtful form. Hadrat Wālā refrains totally from pasting such stamps out of fear that it may cause some problems with the postal service. Many people had to face warrants of arrest from the postal service for involving themselves in such activities.

Hadrat Wālā considers any activity which would taint his honour or cause him any harm to be unwise, in fact, he considers it against the Sharīʿah. Unless, off course, there is a Sharʿī need to do it. This is why he never pastes doubtful stamps. In fact, if he finds used stamps which have not been stamped by the post office or the stamp is very light, he tears it immediately so that no person may look in the refuse and reuse such a stamp.

Letters written with coloured pens

Hadrat Wālā also disapproves of letters written with coloured pens although there is leeway for using them according to some scholars. However, since there is the possibility of spirits being used in the manufacture of powder, he exercises caution. Sometimes, we noticed him having a letter in his waistcoat pocket which is written with a coloured pen. He then recalled it while in his salāh. Hadrat Wālā will remove it from his pocket while in his salāh and throw it away. However, because there is difference of opinion on its permissibility, he would not repeat his salāh. Sometimes, his wet hands touch the writing and he has to now wash his hands. Occasionally, the ink does not come off even after washing it. If the ink falls on his clothing, the clothing too is spoilt. In short, since Hadrat Wālā is inconvenienced by letters written with coloured pens, it would be better if the seekers exercise caution in this regard.

Ink which is very light in colour

If a person does not have a black pen at hand, he may write with a pencil. However, he must apply some pressure when writing so that the writing is not illegible – where Hadrat Wālā

cannot read or is difficult to read. In addition to this, the person must be very careful about writing in very clear letters. He must write with a dark ink so that it is clearly visible. The sentences too must be clear so that whatever he intends saying is understood immediately. Hadrat Wālā does not waste his time reading letters which are not legible or whose meanings are not easily understood. This is because he does not have the time. He merely writes a warning and sends the letter back. If he were to waste his time reading such letters, all his other tasks and duties will fall behind. He replies to such letters as follows: "I find it very difficult to read letters where the writing is illegible. I am therefore sending it back without replying to it." Similarly, he writes to those who send very long letters: "A letter should not be longer than half a page or more than 10-12 lines because I do not have so much of time on my hands."

Advice with regard to worldly matters

Hadrat Wālā should not be consulted on worldly matters nor should any other request be made. This is because he neither has any interest in such matters nor any experience. Consequently, this is why he generally excuses himself from them. Even if he does give advice in special cases, he by and large writes: "If I was in your place, this is what I would do…"

Another reason why Hadrat Wālā abstains from giving advice is that people nowadays do not even understand the meaning of advice. They consider the advisor to be responsible for any harm or benefit which comes in the case where his advice is adhered to. Hadrat Wālā says: "Seeking advice is merely to get assistance from others so that it becomes easy for a person to come to a decision."

Hadrat Wālā says: "Nowadays, the harm of giving advice is that because people have gone beyond the limits in their beliefs with regard to the shaykh, they have this incorrect belief that a harmful or wrong view can never come into the shaykh's heart. They consider it to be certainly good, and feel that if they act against his advice, they will certainly experience harm. All this stems from excesses in one's beliefs, and it is essential to rectify people in this regard."

Ta'wīdh

Hadrat Wālā severely dislikes matters related to taʿwīdh and similar practices. The first reason for his dislike is that it

causes the masses and worldly people to come in crowds. This results in Dīnī harm and there is a strong possibility of wasting time. The second reason is that people have exceeded the limits in their beliefs in this regard and have elevated the status of taʿwīdh beyond what it actually is. Consequently, they do not consider duʿā' to be as effective nor those procedures which have been laid down for this purpose. If the taʿwīdh proves to be effective, they consider it a sign of piety. Hadrat Wālā constantly rectifies the beliefs of people in his speeches, writings and practices. He considers the effects of ʿamalīyyāt to be by and large the results of mental powers. Hadrat Wālā wrote detailed treatises on this subject. Malfūz No. 135 of *Husn al-ʿAzīz* volume one contains a discussion on the effects of mesmerism and mental powers. It is worth reading it.

In short, Hadrat Wālā severely dislikes the occupation of writing taʿwīdh. However, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib had instructed him that if people come to him for taʿwīdh, he must write whatever comes to his mind. Hadrat Wālā therefore, in carrying out his shaykh's instruction, gives taʿwīdh for minor things like headaches, fever, effects of the evil eye and so on. In doing this, he neither follows the restrictions imposed by ʿāmils nor their specific procedures. Instead, in most cases he writes a Qur'ānic verse, Hadīth or duʿā' which comes to his mind at the time, and gives it to the person. By and large, Allāh *taʿālā* enables the purpose to be fulfilled. Just recently my son opened a shop and requested Hadrat Wālā for a taʿwīdh for blessings and also requested his prayers. Through its blessings and the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the shop is much busier than what was expected from a new shop. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Rectifying the excesses of people

When my son requested Hadrat Wālā, he advised him to read the following for expansion in sustenance: Seventy two times *Yā Bāsitu* after the fard salāhs. After some time, my son asked him for something else which he could read. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "When one type of medicine is not effective, another proves to be effective. But this is not the case with prayers. The first is sufficient. Continue with it and Allāh *taʿālā* will accept your prayers when He wills. A person related his misgivings and anxieties to Hadrat Wālā and requested him to teach him something which he could read. He replied: "One does not read anything to remove anxieties, one has to resort to plans and

procedures." The man said: "Okay, teach me a plan and procedure." He replied: "Each anxiety is removed by a separate plan. When you experience a specific anxiety, you must ask me about it."

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "People are committing these wrongs even though they are educated and intelligent people."

Based on the fact that Hadrat Wālā is a Mujaddid and a reformer, he continually rectifies people with regard to the excesses which they commit when it comes to taʿwīdh and ʿamalīyyāt. As regards taʿwīdh for evil spirits, sorcery and so on, Hadrat Wālā refuses by saying that he is not an ʿāmil. However, out of his kindness to them, he says: "If anyone asks me to direct them to an ʿāmil, I will tell them." Consequently, if he is asked, he informs the people. If anyone still insists on a taʿwīdh from Hadrat Wālā despite his refusal and despite saying to the person that he is not an ʿāmil, Hadrat Wālā gives a taʿwīdh on condition that if it is not effective, he must not be requested again. He gives the reason for this precondition: "Because I am not an ʿāmil in the sense that if one taʿwīdh does not help, I must write another one."

Ta'wīdh for impermissible actions

Bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā has no interest whatsoever in the writing of taʿwīdh and other related procedures, he says: "I do not find the writing of two pages of an article as burdensome as writing two lines of a taʿwīdh." Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā never writes taʿwīdh for impermissible actions. In fact, he refuses even where there is a possibility of some evil. On one occasion a person took a taʿwīdh so that a certain woman would agree to marry him. When the woman showed some interest in the man who took the taʿwīdh, he began having illicit relations with her without entering into a marriage with her. The very same person came to Hadrat Wālā and informed him that the taʿwīdh will probably not work now, he must give another taʿwīdh. After this incident, Hadrat Wālā completely stopped giving taʿwīdh for such reasons. Similarly, another person wrote to Hadrat Wālā asking for a taʿwīdh to separate a couple. He informed Hadrat Wālā that a man who is of Fārūqī lineage is going against the wishes and norm of his entire family and intends marrying a girl of Taymūrī lineage. And her entire family except for her mother is also against this

marriage. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: “Separation is permissible only where coming together is unlawful. Is it unlawful to marry a woman that you now have to make plans to cause ill-feeling between the two? I will write a taʿwīdh if you can convince me in this regard.”

More than one ta’wīdh

Because he does not have the time, and in order to put an end to the many requests, Hadrat Wālā does not send more than one taʿwīdh in a letter. Neither does he give more than one in response to verbal requests. He abstains from responding to verbal requests for taʿwīdh on Fridays because many people from the surrounding areas come to perform the jumuʿah salāh. If he were to permit this on Fridays as well, people will think to themselves that since they are there, they should ask for a taʿwīdh as well. In this way, many people will request taʿwīdh whether they need it or not. As for on other days, only the person who has a real need will come to Thānah Bhawan for a taʿwīdh.

In short, every practice of Hadrat Wālā is based on absolutely correct principles, on need and wisdom, and laid down after many experiences. The essence of all his principles is that neither must he be inconvenienced nor must a genuine need of a person be left unfulfilled.

The wrongs of those who ask for ta’wīdh

Those who make verbal requests for taʿwīdh commit many excesses, causing intense discomfort to Hadrat Wālā. Most of them merely say: “Give me a taʿwīdh.” They do not say for what they need a taʿwīdh. Others will merely describe their condition without specifying whether they want a taʿwīdh, Hadrat Wālā to pray for them or his advice. Yet others will describe their condition but not how it came about – whether it is because of an ailment, evil spirits, the evil eye, or some other similar reason – and for which of these reasons they want a taʿwīdh. Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: “After hearing the condition, it is not my job to diagnose the cause. That is the job of a doctor. A doctor listens to the condition as described by the patient and then makes a diagnosis. But I am not a doctor. How can I fathom the cause and for what reason must I write the taʿwīdh? Instead of providing me with details about their condition, all they have to do is tell what they want a taʿwīdh for.”

Most people provide incomplete information and then they expect the person to ask them further questions in order to complete their incomplete information. This is in no way the responsibility of the person. Hadrat Wālā is most fastidious about not placing a burden on anyone for which the person is not responsible. This is why he too cannot tolerate anyone placing a burden on him for which he is not responsible. Therefore, in the above instances, as long as the person does not provide the full information clearly and does not present a principled request, Hadrat Wālā refuses to give a taʿwīdh. He says in this regard: “Can you ever provide half information when purchasing a train ticket, some goods or presenting a request to a ruler? The reason for providing half information [to me and people like me] is a lackadaisical attitude and no respect for the ʿulamā’.”

Disciplining those who provide incomplete information

Hadrat Wālā says to such people: “You will only receive a taʿwīdh if you provide me with full information.” If a person understands this warning and gives the full information, Hadrat Wālā still does not accede to his request immediately. He says to him: “You must come back after half an hour, and if you make a request in a dignified manner, I will give you a taʿwīdh. At present, you discomforted me and hurt my heart. Even if I were to write a taʿwīdh now, it will not be effective because my heart is not open towards you.” The wisdom behind this is that since the person has been disciplined practically, he will never offend anyone for the rest of his life.

If Hadrat Wālā asks the person if he has provided all the information, and he does not know what he left out and what shortcoming he displayed, Hadrat Wālā says to him: “Go outside and learn how to provide full information and how to make a dignified request.” When the person learns the proper etiquette and provides the full information, he still says to the person: “You must return after half an hour, give me the full information and I will give you a taʿwīdh.” When the person returns with the full information, Hadrat Wālā gives him a taʿwīdh immediately.

The purpose behind disciplining a person in this way is so that it serves as a good lesson for the future. If anyone persists in asking verbally and displays shortcomings despite explaining to him, Hadrat Wālā advises him to put his request in writing.

If he commits any offensive act in presenting a written request, Hadrat Wālā asks him to present his request via the post. He cannot bear for any person's work to be left unfinished. Therefore, he lays down principles and rules. However, if a person is not prepared to get his work accomplished through these principles and rules, then he himself is responsible and not Hadrat Wālā.

Those who seek permission for Hizb al-Bahr

If a seeker asks Hadrat Wālā for permission to read Hizb al-Bahr, Dalā'il al-Khayrāt or other similar collections, he first asks the person: "What is the purpose of asking permission?" If the person replies that he would like to make it a practice for the realization of worldly needs, Hadrat Wālā replies: "I am not an 'āmil." Some of them give the following reason for their request: "My purpose is to use it as a means to gain proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā* and obtain His pleasure." Hadrat Wālā replies to such "cleverness": "What, before these prayers were compiled, was there no other way of gaining proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā*? How did the pious elders who compiled these books acquire proximity and how did they become so qualified to have these prayers inspired to them? It shows that there were other ways of acquiring proximity. So you too should follow the same way so that you too can become like them."

Such people are silenced and their incorrect beliefs are rectified. There were some who were already in the practice of reading a section of Dalā'il al-Khayrāt on a daily basis. Hadrat Wālā said to them: "Read one section and see how much time it takes you to complete it. Thereafter, spend the same amount of time daily to read a Durūd Sharīf which is reported authentically. This is superior."

Leaving no space to write

A person wrote a small note and sent it to Hadrat Wālā. He said to those who were present: "This man has surpassed even me in writing concisely." He then wrote to the person: "You have left no place for me to reply to you, I am therefore not writing any reply."

Hadrat Wālā wanted to draw his attention to the fact that when you have some work to be done, etiquette demands that you either include a page on which to write on, or leave a blank space on your letter.

Registered letters

If anyone sends a registered letter and Hadrat Wālā knows through external evidences that the letter is about some dispute, and that is why the sender wants to make certain that he receives it and he cannot deny receiving it, then he sends it back [without signing for it]. But if he does not have any suspicion of this nature, he accepts it. However, he dislikes receiving registered letters. He says: "A signature of acceptance is required where there is a possibility of the addressee denying having received it. This means that the sender feels that the addressee is probably a liar. And it is sinful to consider a Muslim to be a liar without proof from the Sharīʿah. Moreover, the sender's objective too is not fulfilled because he sent a registered letter so that the addressee cannot deny having read the special subject matter which it contains. However, the signature will only display the fact that the letter reached the person. It cannot prove that the actual subject matter reached the addressee. It is therefore a wasted effort to send registered letters. As for sending a registered letter to ensure it reaches safely, this can be accomplished by an ordinary registered letter [which merely shows that the letter reached the person]."

A reply to those who apologize for a late reply

If a seeker apologizes for not writing to Hadrat Wālā for a long time, Hadrat Wālā writes back the following in order to reassure him: "I do not wait expectantly for anyone's letter. There is no need to apologize. You can be rest assured."

On such occasions, Hadrat Wālā says to those who are present: "How is it going to harm me if anyone does not write to me? He will be harming his own self. What is the need to apologize to me?"

I [the compiler] say: Apologizing in this way is certainly unprincipled because it means that Hadrat Wālā is waiting expectantly for letters from the seekers, whereas they write to him for their own benefit. What is the need for Hadrat Wālā to await their letters?!

Unclear money orders

If a money order coupon does not contain any message or the message is unclear whereby it is not ascertained clearly as to how the money is to be spent, then Hadrat Wālā sends the

money order back and also writes his reason for sending it back. Even if the attached message states that a letter is to follow soon wherein details on how the money should be spent will be provided, Hadrat Wālā sends it back. The reason for this is that if the money was accepted and then the letter arrived containing information which – according to Hadrat Wālā – needs the money to be sent back, then apart from the inconvenience of keeping the money as a trust, it is a laborious process to send the money back and an additional cost. Previously, Hadrat Wālā used to accept the money order before the letter, but when this caused a lot of confusion, he laid down this rule of returning money orders of this nature.

Money sent by insured or registered post

Similarly if anyone sends money by insured or registered post, Hadrat Wālā send it back except in cases where he is fully convinced of where it has come from. His refusal to accept such money is based on the same above-mentioned reasons and difficulties. Some time back a large amount of money – if I recall correctly, it was about 500 rupees – was sent by insured post. Hadrat Wālā – as was his practice – sent it back. The person then sent a detailed letter about the money and sought permission to send it again. The money was from an estate and permission was not obtained from some of the heirs to spend it in good causes. Hadrat Wālā therefore prohibited the person from sending it. Later on, the person obtained permission and approval from all the inheritors and asked Hadrat Wālā for permission to send it to him. Hadrat Wālā granted his permission.

Had the money been accepted the first time, it could have caused many problems and a lot of confusion. Many incidents of this nature take place on a regular basis. Hadrat Wālā constantly draws the attention of those who are present and says to them: “Look! People think I am very suspicious. If I am suspicious, my suspicions prove correct most of the time. The fact of the matter is that I have laid down most of my principles after many experiences. If others were to experience similar incidents, they would become more suspicious than me.”

When Hadrat Wālā’s diagnoses, suspicions and possibilities prove correct – as happens most of the time – he says: “If Allāh *taʿālā* enables a physician to recognize the pulse of people and

diagnose their intricate and subtle illnesses merely by checking their pulse, will you also refer to him as a suspicious person?"

In most cases, Hadrat Wālā returns moneys which come through insured post or money orders because this is against his principles. When the same amounts come back according to his laid down principles – as happens most of the time – Hadrat Wālā says to those who are present: "Look! When something is bound to come, it will certainly come even if one were to send it back a thousand times. Why, then, should we spoil our intentions and act against our principles!?"

An ailing person sends money

I think it would be appropriate to relate a few more incidents related to Hadrat Wālā's precautions as they would also serve as lessons. Since it is obligatory to exercise these precautions and all scholars unanimously agree on the obligation of the fine juridical points which Hadrat Wālā adheres to, no one has the nerve to object. Nowadays, people do not even think of practising on these fine points. Just recently a person sent a considerable amount of money to Hadrat Wālā to be spent in charitable causes. The person added: "I am extremely ill and have no hope of recovering."

Hadrat Wālā pays special attention to upholding of rights and always bears in mind the injunctions of the Sharīʿah and minute intricate juridical issues. The man's letter did not contain any reference to a bequest, so Hadrat Wālā wrote a document on a Sharʿī bequest, sent it to the man and asked him to sign it and send it back to him. In this way, the bequest will be valid according to the Sharīʿah. Hadrat Wālā also thought to himself that if the signed bequest comes back to him, well and good; if not, the money will be sent back. However, since the man had sent the money with the intention of a bequest, he signed the document without hesitation and sent it back to Hadrat Wālā. Had he not done this, Hadrat Wālā would have sent the money back. In fact, had Hadrat Wālā not known that the amount is far less than one third of his estate – making such a bequest even when a person has lost hope in life is permissible – he would have returned it immediately.

A bequest made by a devoted attendant and khalīfah

Janāb Hājī Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib Rangūnī *rahimahullāh* was a very sincere, devoted and wealthy attendant and khalīfah

of Hadrat Wālā. When he passed away, his mature heirs sent a large amount of money which the deceased had written as a bequest in Hadrat Wālā's name. However, Hadrat Wālā wrote back and said: "Since the deceased has some immature heirs, the bequest can only be accepted if it is proven by some proof of the Sharīʿah. If not, it cannot be accepted. A Sharʿī proof should therefore be presented to the ʿulamā' of that place. Those ʿulamā' must also be informed of all those who were present when the bequest was written, or in whose presence Hājī Sāhib agreed for the bequest to be written. They must also be informed as to who and where the bequest was kept. A formal fatwā must be obtained from them and it must be sent to me. If I consider it to be a Sharʿī proof, I will happily accept the bequest; if not, I will excuse myself from it. Subsequently, a complete and formal fatwā together with Sharʿī proofs was sent. Hadrat Wālā was fully satisfied and he accepted the amount happily.

Similarly, after the same Hājī Sāhib passed away, Hadrat Wālā returned a large amount of money which had been placed as a trust with Hadrat Wālā to be spent for a specific charitable work. Hadrat Wālā did not wait to inform the heirs first [before sending the money back] because they – out of respect – may ask him not to send it back irrespective of whether it was wise or unwise to do that. On the other hand, after they received the money, there were at total ease to decide what to do. The mature heirs decided to send the money back to Hadrat Wālā and they gave to their immature siblings an equal amount from their side. They requested Hadrat Wālā to use it for the same purpose as previously. Hadrat Wālā accepted without hesitation because now there was no Sharʿī prohibition. He spent the money in the designated charitable work.

The matter concerning the houses of Hakīm Nūr Ahmad

Janāb Hakīm Nūr Ahmad Sāhib Kānpūrī *rahimahullāh* was from among Hadrat Wālā's khulafā'. When he was on his death bed, he handed over three houses to Hadrat Wālā through a written bequest. Despite the difficulties of weakness and illness, he went to the court and had his bequest registered. However, because he was in Kānpūr and Hadrat Wālā was in Thānah Bhawan, the distance and short time did not permit him to inform Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā was therefore ignorant of this entire arrangement. Coincidentally, Hadrat

Wālā journeyed to Kānpūr and was informed of the matter. Bearing in mind that this was a matter concerning rights of fellow humans, Hadrat Wālā made a thorough investigation to find out the Hakīm Sāhib's heirs but learnt that he did not leave behind any heirs. However, he heard that he has a relative who is gone missing. After reflecting over all the Hakīm Sāhib's arrangements, Hadrat Wālā concluded that had he had the time, he would have given his estate for charitable purposes because he had no heirs. However, since he did not find any reliable person, he felt he should write the bequest in favour of Hadrat Wālā. He made this bequest trusting Hadrat Wālā to spend the income from his houses for charitable works. Hadrat Wālā came to this conclusion after pondering over the Hakīm Sāhib's temperament.

Thus, instead of keeping the three houses for himself, Hadrat Wālā – based on his extreme caution – gave them as a bequest to an orphanage in Kānpūr after laying down certain conditions. He also had the deed of bequest registered. Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā published an announcement with reference to this bequest so that none of his own heirs may make any claims. Since the deceased had a missing relative, Hadrat Wālā also preserved his rights. Furthermore, if other heirs are established later on, their rights will also be upheld. Hadrat Wālā did this by making reference to this in the deed of bequest. Hadrat Wālā took an additional precaution by making an announcement in *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* (a document regarding his own bequests). It is quoted here verbatim.

Article four related to houses and properties

I had made mention of the houses of Hakīm Nūr Ahmad which I set aside as an endowment for the orphanage in Kānpūr with certain conditions. The most important of these conditions which is laid down with a view to safeguarding the rights of fellow humans and which needs to be announced is that I could not ascertain any legal heir of the deceased. If this is really the case [that he has no heir], then all the houses in their entirety are endowed to the orphanage. If a legal heir is established through proofs of the Sharīʿah and he considers this endowment to be lawful (it is essential for the prerequisites to be found in order to consider it lawful according to the Sharīʿah) then all the houses are still endowed. If he does not consider it lawful or it cannot be considered lawful due to some

reason, then one third of the houses are endowed and the heir can exercise his right over two thirds. Furthermore, from now until the time he receives his rightful share, whatever income was derived from the endowment must be calculated and two thirds must be returned to him. If the said endowment does not have that amount at the time, the two thirds income must first be filled by the remaining one third, and the expenses for the orphanage may be paid for thereafter.

As a precaution, the full details of the Kānpūr court – where the endowment is registered – are noted here so that it will be easy for the rightful person to copy them when the time comes. (the date and file number are then mentioned).

We can see from the above how Hadrat Wālā took consideration of all the Shar'ī aspects and compiled the deed of endowment. All the registrars who saw it were most impressed by it and said: "We have not come across such a clear deed of endowment which covers all angles." This, despite the fact that Hadrat Wālā was neither a lawyer nor one conversant with the law.

A sender passes away before an amount could reach Hadrat Wālā

If Hadrat Wālā learns that a certain person sent money to him but the man passed away before the amount could reach Hadrat Wālā, he would return it because mere sending of an item to a person does not make the person its owner. Rather, he has to take possession of it. In this case, since the sender passed away before Hadrat Wālā could receive it, Hadrat Wālā has not taken legal possession of it as yet. Hadrat Wālā is therefore not the owner of that amount. The heirs of the sender are its owners. If Hadrat Wālā hears of a sender passing away before he [Hadrat Wālā] can receive the money order, then Hadrat Wālā does not even accept the money order; he sends it back.

Similarly, if Hadrat Wālā hears of a sender passing away while Hadrat Wālā is using the sent amount, Hadrat Wālā stops spending it immediately. He then informs the heirs of the specific places and avenues in which the money is being sent, and asks them if he must continue. If he receives satisfactory replies from all sides, he continues using it. If not, he sends the remaining amount back. Where there was no specification for

its spending, he sends the amount back without asking for any directives from the heirs.

Rules related to khatam contributions

Similar precautions are also made with regard to khatam contributions. Before explaining the precautions, I feel it necessary to explain khatam contributions so that its purpose may be understood.

The reality of a khatam contribution is that since some time – under the suggestion of Hadrat Wālā – the Khatm-e-Khwājgān is read daily after the ʿasr salāh. This is done for general welfare works and to assist those of the residents of the Khānqāh who are needy. Based on certain appropriate prerequisites, the poor residents of the Khānqāh join in this Khatm. Those who request duʿā's for any of their lawful worldly reasons make a payment of one anna per day. On the completion of the Khatm, each of the person's who made the payment are mentioned by name and duʿā' is made according to the request which they made. Since it is permissible to accept payment for ʿamalīyyāt and ruqyah, the received amounts are distributed among those who took part in the Khatm. If anyone would like duʿā' to be made for him without payment of this amount, it is made for free for him for seven days.

Hadrat Wālā's precautions with regard to these received amounts are now explained.

1. No payment is accepted from a person requesting duʿā' solely for Dīnī reasons. This is because such a duʿā' is part of Dīn, and apart from certain instances as outlined in the books of jurisprudence, it is not permissible to accept payment for Dīn.

2. If a sick person sent money to make duʿā' for his recovery, and he passes away before the sent amount is spent in full, distributing his remaining money is stopped immediately. The remaining amount is sent back.

Some heirs requested that duʿā' of forgiveness should be made for the deceased in lieu for the remaining amount, but Hadrat Wālā refused saying that it was not permissible to accept any payment for duʿā' of forgiveness.

3. If a wealthy person wishes to send more than one anna per day, it is not accepted. On one occasion, a governor and on

another occasion a prince wanted to send more than the stipulated amount. Hadrat Wālā refused. Only one anna per day was accepted. However, after the governor succeeded in achieving his goal [for which he had sent the money], he sought permission to send 150 rupees to feed and clothe the poor. He was given permission. He sent the money and it was used as requested.

A question must be clear

"A question must be concise and its meaning clear. Some people write questions in a manner which can never be understood by a person who does not know about the matter in question. The reader now has to read different parts of the question several times."

Hand delivered letters

"I do not value hand delivered letters too much. I feel that there is no need to reply to it because if the person needed a reply, he would have spent his money and sent it by post."

Dislike for new types of expressions

"I abhor the new types of expressions which are in vogue nowadays. The tones of the expressions are strange, and incorrect and false things are presented as if they are truths and facts. These must have been innovated by a very conspiring and scheming person."

In short, there are thousands of precautions which Hadrat Wālā exercises in his day to day life. The extreme importance which he attaches to upholding of rights and clarity in transactions is – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – well known and acknowledged by both friend and foe. Those who observe him exercising these precautions always acquire practical lessons which are far more effective than countless speeches and writings. I now conclude this third point and commence the next one.

Principles Related to Visitors

A form for newcomers

New comers who [generally] cannot even provide clear answers to simple questions are given a form which they must fill. In this way, they can write the answers to all the questions at ease. If a person cannot write, he can dictate the answers to

someone. The form is then returned to Hadrat Wālā. In this way, both parties will be saved from problems and confusion. The form is as follows:

Initial questions to newcomers to the Khānqāh

Some people come to me for the fulfilment of certain objectives. Their fulfilment is dependent on learning details about them. However, when I pose questions to them, most of them cannot answer, give incomplete answers or can only answer after posing the same questions several times to them. This naturally vexes me. When a person is agitated, it becomes difficult to fulfil another's objectives. Upon enquiry, most of them say that they get confused when I pose verbal questions to them. In order to make matters easy, the following form is presented to them. They must fill in the black spaces by themselves or get someone to help them. The form must then be handed to me. In this way, both parties will experience comfort.

1. Name
2. Hometown
3. Where have you come from at present and how long were you there?
4. Occupation
5. Have you inherited any land?
6. What is your level of knowledge in Urdu, Arabic or English
7. What is your actual purpose in coming here? Have you come merely to meet me, or do you have something to say, to write and give to me, or speak to me verbally?

8. Would you like to speak to me in privacy or in the presence of others?
9. If you already pledged bayʿah to me, when was this? What do you want to learn?
10. Which of my lectures and writings have you read?
11. If you have corresponded with me in the past and you have all the correspondence with you, I would like to see it.
12. How long will you be staying for?
13. Where will you be staying?
14. Is this the first time you came to the Khānqāh or did you come before? If you came before, how long did you spend here?
15. Are you aware of the food arrangements here?
16. Did you see the large hand-written announcement outside?

Signed: Ashraf ʿAlī

Time table

In order to make things easy for new comers and also to put an end to disturbances to his time, Hadrat Wālā pasted a time-table outside the area where he receives visitors. Consideration was given to others to be able to converse with him and sit in his company, while at the same time, not causing any disturbance to his time. This announcement is quoted below:

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent the Merciful

Announcement

This announcement is made so that neither do people who need to meet me are inconvenienced nor am I.

1. From morning until noon I am occupied with various tasks which can only be accomplished in solitude. Meeting anyone or speaking to them during this time is both disturbing and inconvenient.

2. However, three people are excluded from the above. (1) A person who has just arrived and wants to merely meet me and shake hands with me. (2) A person who is leaving and wants to bid farewell. (3) A person who has a need which cannot be deferred. For example, he has come to take a taʿwīdh for labour pains or needs to ask a ruling which cannot be delayed. However, the moment each of these three persons enter, they must inform me of the reason which has brought them here so that not knowing the reason does not cause any worry.

3. From noon until I complete the zuhr salāh, and for as long as I remain in my assembly is my time for a siesta and salāh. I require to be excused from all meetings and any other services during this time.

4. Once I return to my assembly after the zuhr salāh and until the adhān for the ʿasr salāh, I give open permission for anyone to come in, sit down, converse on any topic, ask for taʿwīdh, etc. However, no taʿwīdh will be given on Fridays.

5. The same rule as number three will apply from the adhān of ʿasr salāh until the end of ʿasr salāh.

6. Rule number one will apply from after the ʿasr salāh until after the ʿishā salāh. The same people who are mentioned in rule number two are excluded here as well.

7. I am obviously excused from all engagements after the ʿishā salāh unless there is an extremely severe need.

8. The above rules apply to those who are able to express their objectives and needs in the presence of others. If anyone wants to speak to me in private then if he feels that a written note would suffice, he must place his note in the box which is placed outside my assembly area. He must include his full address stating where he requires the answer. For example, in such and such room number or on the pulpit of the musjid. These notes are always removed from the box after the fajr salāh. In this way, the person will receive a written reply.

A person wanting to speak to me in privacy must inquire about a suitable time. He must do this through the same procedure [of placing a note in the box]. He can then come and speak to me at whatever time I stipulate. I normally set aside the time after maghrib salāh for this.

9. There are some guests to whom I give special permission to sit with me in privacy. Others should not use this as a basis for their own selves. Similarly, if I permit a certain person to attend to some of my needs, e.g. fanning me, then others should not follow suite unless they receive special permission from me. In the same way, no one must try to serve me in any way without express permission, e.g. carrying my shoes, filling my water can and keeping it ready for me, and so on.

10. When I am walking on the road, no one must accompany me. Nor should anyone call for me from his house.

Note: The above rules only apply to those who come here solely out of the faith and confidence which they have in me. These rules do not apply to a person having any other relationship with me. However, if I restrict a person to a particular rule, it is incumbent on him to adhere to it.

Note: If I make any changes to the above, one will have to act on the changes. Separate rules are applicable to personal employees. These have been explained verbally to them.

A few changes are made to the above time table in the month of Ramadān. Hadrat Wālā writes them personally with his blessed pen and displays it on the last day of Shaʿbān. It is quoted below:

Two important announcements

(these are the same as those which were made last Ramadān)

1. Time is limited and there are many things to do. The morning assembly is therefore suspended until the end of Ramadān. Permission is granted for one or two minutes of essential verbal conversation.

2. Those who are not permitted any correspondence during their stay here must not write any type of note. Those who are permitted must not place any note in the letter-box which is outside my assembly area. Instead, they must send it by post. The reply will be given as follows: They must go to Hāfiz I'jāz after the 'asr salāh. He will have a box from which he will call out names of those who had written notes to me. He will then return the notes in this way. It would be better to wait for the reply one day after having posted the note. There are those rare occasions when the reply is given on the third day. That is all.

Written by Ashraf 'Alī – 1 Ramadān al-Mubārak 1354 A.H.

Balance in practising on principles and rules

I have personally seen some special associates who were residing in the Khānqāh giving their letters directly in Hadrat Wālā's hands instead of placing them in the letter box. This demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's perfect balance. Those who adhere strictly to principles inevitably find their strict adherence leading them to "dryness" and they have no concept whatsoever of exceptions to the rule. While adherence to principles is one of the demands of a sound temperament, it [sound temperament] also demands exceptions in certain special cases and on occasions of need.

Therefore, none of Hadrat Wālā's rules are without exceptions even if they are only applied at times of need because allowing too many exceptions demonstrates an element of being unprincipled. This is why we find Hadrat Wālā's exceptions also based on absolute principles. In other words, only in certain special situations, to the extent of need, and only those who are special associates, relatives, or hold a special level of honour and distinction, and people of severe needs are sometimes exempted from the rules.

Rules for those who seek permission to come to Hadrat Wālā

If a new seeker writes to Hadrat Wālā seeking permission to come to meet him, the first question he asks him is: "What purpose and objective of yours is there which makes its fulfilment dependent on coming here?" The seekers give various answers to this question. However, as long as they mention objectives which do not necessitate coming here, he continues finding fault with them and does not give them permission to come. This applies even if their purpose of coming is an objective in itself. For example, coming for the sake of rectification, duʿā's, obtaining a taʿwīdh and so on. However, if a person writes that his purpose of coming is solely to meet him and promises that in the course of his stay, he will neither address Hadrat Wālā nor write any note to him, and will merely remain silent in his assembly, then Hadrat Wālā gladly grants permission. He says in this regard: "This is one objective which can never be acquired without coming here. As for all other objectives, they can be realized without coming here." A person should therefore come here solely for this one purpose. The condition of neither addressing Hadrat Wālā nor writing any note to him will be explained further on.

In short, Hadrat Wālā only permits a person to come if he clearly and explicitly states that his sole purpose of wanting to come is to meet him, and also makes a promise that he will neither address Hadrat Wālā nor write any note to him. If a person does not agree to these conditions, he has the choice of not coming.

Those who come without permission

Hadrat Wālā says: "If anyone wishes to come after having obtained permission, then the condition is that he must not come without first establishing these rules and regulations [as mentioned above]. But if a person arrives here without asking for permission, I have no guards to stop him. Anyone can come when he likes. However, upon arrival, I will pose the same question to him [as quoted above] and lay down the same conditions for remaining here."

A reply to the unprincipled actions of those who come to the Khānqāh

When some of those who arrived without permission were posed with the above mentioned questions, they gave disjointed replies, uncouth answers, and made offensive statements. The

ill feeling reached such a level that they were either made to go back from where they had come on the very next train or they themselves departed. Wisdom itself also required this because when matters are not clear, to continue staying there would cause discomfort to both parties. The order to leave immediately is quite rare. Most of the newcomers who offend Hadrat Wālā ask him for pardon. Hadrat Wālā says to them: "You have asked for pardon and I have pardoned you. However, what about the offence which you caused me? Has it merely disappeared? The purpose for which you came here – i.e. to stay over – will only be fulfilled if you do something to make up for your offence." If the person asks as to how he can make up for it, then in most cases Hadrat Wālā asks the person to decide for himself. Previously, Hadrat Wālā used to specify how a person should make up for his offence, but he no longer does this so that he may not be wrongly accused of being too strict and harsh.

Once the person himself – or through the advice of others – makes up for his offences sufficiently and appropriately, Hadrat Wālā accepts it and even provides some concession from his side. But if the person's plan of making up is insufficient and inappropriate, Hadrat Wālā will continue pointing to its faults until the person comes to a correct plan of action or Hadrat Wālā himself shows him a way out. In most cases, the manner of making up for the offence comprises of the person going to a nearby relative and then sending a note requesting permission to come to Hadrat Wālā. For some people, all the person has to do is write down the offence which he committed and to place it on the notice board of the Khānqāh. For yet others, Hadrat Wālā instructed them to go to each person in the Khānqāh individually and express his mistake to him. This is stipulated so that it weighs heavily on the person and it serves as a warning for the future.

A shortcoming committed by a seeker

Just recently a person decided that he would make up for his mistake by going to Sahāranpūr and then seek permission to come to Thānah Bhawan. Consequently, he did this and permission was given to him. However, when he came back, he committed an offence which discomforted Hadrat Wālā. When he was asked the reason for it, he began providing incorrect explanations and reasons. Hadrat Wālā detests this severely

because it is against integrity and sincerity. Since it was a chronic ailment, it needed more severe ways of making up for it. So instead of instructing him to go to Sahāranpūr, Hadrat Wālā instructed him to go to Delhi. Hadrat Wālā then repeatedly said: "By Allāh, I am most perturbed. In fact, I am more perturbed than him, but what could I do? He could not have been rectified without instructing him to make up for his mistake in this way."

The man was a genuine seeker so he happily agreed to go to Delhi. On reaching there, he sent another request seeking permission to come to Thānah Bhawan and acknowledged his error. Hadrat Wālā gladly granted him permission. However, at the time of presenting his letter of permission to Hadrat Wālā, he first removed it from his pocket. Hadrat Wālā was about to accept it from him but he left it on the floor and extended his hands to shake hands with Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā was severely offended by this. Had he wanted to shake hands first, he should have done that and then he should have taken out the letter from his pocket. And if he took out the letter first, he should have given the letter and not shaken hands with him, or shaken hands after handing over the letter. Hadrat Wālā asked him to leave. On such occasions, Hadrat Wālā says to those who are present: "If I remain patient over such actions of these people, they would not be rectified and my heart would develop ill-feeling towards them. Now that I have expressed myself and some people make up for their offence, I am clear in my heart."

A person enters a special assembly without permission

On one occasion, a person entered Hadrat Wālā's special assembly and sat down. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "This is the time for my special assembly. You must come after zuhr. You must leave now." The man left.

Hadrat Wālā then addressed those who were present: "Look! Had I resorted to politeness and not told him anything, I would have felt severely constrained for as long as he remained seated. I would have developed ill-feeling towards him. Now that he departed silently and immediately after I told him, my heart has developed value and love for him. You can gauge which of the two situations is better."

Stories of past spiritual masters

I [the compiler] say with regard to the above mentioned forms of atonements: The spiritual masters of the past used to lay down even more stringent forms of atonements. In his *Ṯabaqāt*, Imām Shaʿrānī *raẖimahullāh* relates an incident of a certain shaykh. A seeker came to him and said: "I have come from a very distant place." Because this seeker said this to demonstrate his good action, the shaykh punished him by refusing him to come to him for the next three years. Similarly, the same book relates the story of a seeker who was residing with a shaykh. The seeker had spent 100 000 dirhams of his own, and another 100 000 dirhams which he took on loan. Despite this, he was not even given permission to speak to the shaykh. Many other stories of this nature are related in *Ṯabaqāt* which H̱aḏrat Wālā relates to us and then says: "The seekers of today are no seekers. They cannot bear the slightest forms of atonements."

When H̱aḏrat Wālā saw that those who are coming to the Khānqāh are breaking many of the conditions which were laid down, and that a lot of time is being wasted in laying down the conditions, he prepared a complete programme and had it printed at his own cost. It is quoted here:

Programme for those who intend establishing a bond

This programme is made up of seven steps:

1. During a seeker's initial visit here, he must neither speak to me nor write any note to me. He must remain absolutely silent, attend the assemblies and be in my company with a view to acquiring insight and affinity.

2. After leaving here, if he feels he wants to establish a bond, he must correspond with me from his place of residence. This correspondence is with a view to increasing affinity with me.

3. If he wants to return here with the sole purpose of corresponding with me, then before coming here he must write to me to establish whether there is agreement and affinity between us and obtain permission to correspond with me.

4. After obtaining my permission, it will be essential for him to present the letter of permission on his arrival. In the

course of his stay here, he will be permitted to only correspond with me, there will be no direct speaking.

5. After acquiring complete affinity – which can be acquired after a long period of correspondence – he may correspond with me and converse with me during the course of his stay here after having received permission [to correspond and converse with me].

All the above applies in the case where a bond is to be maintained.

6. If there is no hope for affinity due to differences in inclinations and temperaments, then for the sake of his advantage – and not because of any ill-feeling – I will advise him to separate himself from here, stay away from here and to revert to someone with whom he has affinity.

7. If even in this state he expresses the desire to write to me for du'ā' or to enquire about my well-being, I will permit him. He may even come here and sit in my company provided he is not offended by having to remain silent.

The above seven steps can be summed up as follows:

1. Merely attending an assembly.
2. Correspondence from his place of residence.
3. After acquiring the necessary affinity and obtaining permission to sit in my company, he may stay here and correspond with me but not converse with me.
4. After a lengthy period of correspondence, acquiring total affinity and obtaining permission to remain in my company, he may correspond with me and converse with me.

In the case where there is no affinity:

5. I will advise him to revert to someone with whom he has affinity.
6. Permission will be given to correspond solely to seek du'ā' and inquire about my well-being.
7. Provided he does not feel offended, he may be permitted to sit in my company without corresponding or conversing with me.

That is all.
Written by Ashraf ʿAlī

The benefit of printing the above programme

This programme makes it very easy for both parties. When any new seeker asks permission to come here, Hadrat Wālā presents this printed programme to him. If he seeks permission to come here with the condition of not corresponding and not conversing with Hadrat Wālā in the course of his stay, he is given permission. He is also instructed to present the letter of permission on his arrival. The newcomers present it the moment they arrive, and they are given permission to stay over without any hesitation. There are no problems after this provided the person does not do anything against Hadrat Wālā's principles.

The benefit of prohibiting newcomers from speaking and writing to Hadrat Wālā

Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "Allāh *taʿālā* Himself put this idea in my heart to make a condition to newcomers to abstain from speaking and writing. If not, the absence of affinity in temperament and ignorance about the path would have caused them to severely offend me through their unprincipled statements and disjointed questions. A lot of my time and their own time would have been wasted. All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that I can now continue with my work with absolute peace and people too have the opportunity of listening to what I say with concentration and to ponder and reflect over my talks. Had I permitted them to interject, it would not have been an assembly but a public meeting [where everyone says whatever comes to his mind]. They would have been confused, they would have vexed me and they would have left here completely empty. Now I receive many letters in which the seekers state that they experience a lot of benefit from remaining silent. The need to sit silently is supported from this Hadīth as well. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself requested one of his Companions to recite the Qur'ān to him. The Companion said: "I must recite it to you while it has been revealed to you!?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "I like to hear it recited by someone else."

Hadrat Wālā then said: "There is more reward in reciting the Qur'ān by oneself, while there is more enjoyment and more effect in listening to it being recited by others."

The reason behind rules and regulations

Hadrat Wālā also says: “All my practices with regard to those who come here are laid down to teach them etiquette. This is the fundamental, and everything else are subsidiaries which constantly change according to time, reason and needs. This fundamental is clearly supported by the Hadīth:

كأن على رؤوسهم الطير

As if birds were sitting on their [Companions’] heads.

Bearing in mind the clear benefits of this rule, even if it was not supported by the above Hadīth, there can be no objection to its desirability and applicability. Medical books have many tried and tested prescriptions and all are considered to be applicable although none of them are supported by Hadīth. But the fact that my practice is supported by Hadīth, it becomes stronger and its goodness increases.”

The responsibility of those present at the time when speaking and writing is prohibited

Hadrat Wālā gives another advantage of the prohibition of speaking and writing in the course of one’s stay in the Khānqāh. He says: “Newcomers must sit silently and observe my method of training, my habits, the peculiarities of my temperament and my talks. They must ponder over them with an open mind. When they leave here, they are free to come to a conclusion about me. If my training method and temperament do not appeal to them, and they do not expect developing an affinity with me, they may revert to someone else. If everything about me appeals to them, they can correspond with me for the sake of rectification. In the beginning, they must not come here with the specific intention of rectification. Instead, they must come here to learn and to see if there would be mutual affinity or not. If there would be, they must correspond with me for their rectification, and to learn the correct and beneficial way of presenting their spiritual ailments to me.”

Those who observe silence realize their objective

I [the compiler] say: Those who present themselves before Hadrat Wālā are able to fulfil these two objectives very easily and in a most excellent manner. The reason for this is that Hadrat Wālā by nature does not have any airs, is informal,

simple, clear and free-loving. H̲ad̲rat Wālā clearly displays his creed, method of training, habits and peculiarities of his temperament – in short every part of his life – through his words, actions, statements and demeanour by night and day without the slightest fear of criticism from anyone. In fact, there are times when he practises on concessions of the Sharī'ah so that people could see and do not consider him to be more than the worshipper and ascetic which he is. For example, he will occasionally perform optional s̲alāhs while sitting, engage in a lot of joking and laughing with children, give full vent to his anger when the occasion demands it, promptly reprimand people who came from very far off places for breaking his principles without bothering in the least if their faith in him is broken. H̲ad̲rat Wālā explains another objective for his approach: "Whatever whisperings a person is to experience about me for the rest of his life and whatever objections he is to have against me must all come to him at once and be put to an end at once. After this, he will either remain faithful to me for the rest of his life or lose confidence in me for the rest of his life. In this way, he will be firm on either of the two options. If I were to make myself up, the person will not have a single opinion about me for the rest of his life. When he sees me doing something different from what he thought about me, he will think to himself: Look, one point has been exposed. When he sees another point, he will say: Look, another point has been exposed. In short, he will not be satisfied for the rest of his life. On the other hand, since I have no airs about myself and I simply am as I am, the person learns everything about me the moment he interacts with me. After that, a person may remain [in my company] or he may leave. In this way, I too am focussed. Those who consider piety in a person to mean that he must be totally unperceptive like an idol – which does not know who paid respects to it and who disgraced it – then their thoughts about me are disposed of in their first meeting with me. Furthermore, who is it who made claims to piety and who announced that they must come here? I am just a student. I merely convey whatever I learnt from my teachers and elders about Dīn. I express the reality of Dīn which I understood through the blessings of their companionship. If anyone wishes, he may accept it, if not, he has the right to refuse it. I do not know anything about flattery nor do I consider it beneficial. Although some people think that I ought to bring them gradually to my path, I am against it

because from my experience, when a person has a certain criterion for piety – whether right or wrong – he remains devoted to the person as long as he sees that criterion. No sooner he drops from that criterion, all the person's faith in him disappears. The person [the shaykh in this instance] assumes that this person is his devotee, whereas he is really devoted to his own thoughts and notions."

Similarly, if a devotee loses his faith [in the shaykh], the shaykh must realize that the devotee did not have faith in him in the first place. Rather, he had faith in some imaginary person. There is therefore no need to rue over the loss of such an imaginary devotee. In fact, he should be happy that he lost him before having established a bond with him. Had the bond been broken after it was established, it would have created a lot of ill-feeling. Furthermore, as long as the bond remained, the person would have vexed the shaykh a lot. This is why I have a very open and clear relationship with every seeker from the very beginning. The matter must be decided right from the beginning. Neither he nor I must be deceived and deluded. This is my approach."

I [the compiler] say: Hadrat Wālā's total disregard for what people think is a sign of his highest form of excellence, sincerity and truthfulness. A trader expressed this quality in his own business language: "Why should he flatter anyone? Is his product defective?"

This approach of Hadrat Wālā makes it very easy for newcomers to learn their first objective of coming here, i.e. to ascertain their affinity or lack of it with him. As for their second objective, i.e. learning the correct methodology for rectification, this is realized by attending Hadrat Wālā's assemblies because this is what he speaks about in them. Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā reads certain letters of the seekers to those who are present in his assemblies. He does this without disclosing the writer's identity. He verbally explains their errors. In this way, those who are present learn how to correspond with Hadrat Wālā about their own rectification and how to present their spiritual ailments to him. Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "Rectification is not realized by remaining in someone's company, affinity is developed. The person learns how to present his spiritual ailments, understands my replies, and develops the etiquette of practising on them."

The letter of a person who was sitting silently

This incident occurred just recently. The person remained silently in the Khānqāh for a few days and went back from where he had come. He writes: "I cannot describe the peace and tranquillity which I experienced in the course of my stay and remaining in Hadrat Wālā's blessed company. I specifically ascertained the defects of my self. The sickness of having evil thoughts about others is quite severe in me. I request its treatment from Hadrat Wālā."

Look! By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this man attached himself to the path in the proper manner from his very first visit. He then became occupied in the actual purpose of this bond – viz. rectification – in the proper manner. Hadrat Wālā too commenced his formal training immediately. There are many other seekers who – due to their follies and misdemeanours – are unable to succeed in this regard even after several months of correspondence.

This particular person's success is by virtue of the programme which Hadrat Wālā laid down for those who want to establish a bond with him, and which was quoted a few pages back.

The above-mentioned seeker's letter was quoted. We now quote Hadrat Wālā's reply to it. Bearing in mind that it is Hadrat Wālā's initial training of the person, it would serve as a lesson for new seekers. The person asked for a treatment for evil thoughts. Hadrat Wālā posed the following questions to him: "Are these evil thoughts voluntary or involuntary? Do you merely have evil thoughts [of a person] or do you act accordingly as well? What else do you do? Explain with a few examples."

Glory to Allāh! Look at Hadrat Wālā's questions! They are not really questions but answers to the person's ailment. In addition to subsidiary issues, general principles of the path can be derived from them through the slightest bit of pondering.

When seekers come in a group

Hadrat Wālā disapproves of seekers coming intentionally in a group. But if they come together coincidentally, he does not bother about it. The wisdoms behind not coming together are quoted from *Husn al-ʿAzīz*, vol. one, no. 36.

Some of my friends decided to go to Hadrat Wālā to meet him in Thānah Bhawan. He was gone to Kānpūr at the time. Hadrat Wālā said to them: "If you want to come solely to meet me, you may come as you like. But if you have any other intention (i.e. rectification), you must not come together. Instead, each person must come separately or else he will not benefit because it is obvious that each person will have to be treated according to his situation. If all of you come together, I will have to treat you alike. If I feel I have to be strict towards one of you, he will feel ashamed in the presence of his companions. It is therefore best for each person to come separately. This is actually a journey to the Hereafter. The dead go separately to their graves."

A reply to a person's request

A person wrote to Hadrat Wālā and expressed his intention of bringing his father. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "If you bring him with, you will have to see to his needs, to which I have no objection whatsoever. However, he will not benefit." Based on the above-mentioned wisdoms, Hadrat Wālā does not like anyone to come with anyone else.

The story of a seeker

I recall a particular incident in this regard. A seeker committed an offence for which he was handed over to one of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā'. This seeker used to come annually to meet Hadrat Wālā together with the khalīfah. Then on one occasion, he came on his own. When he was departing, Hadrat Wālā said to him: "During this particular visit of yours, I find a special effect on my heart because you came on your own. Previously you used to come subservient to another person. Consequently, I did not pay particular attention to you. I used to think to myself: He has come in the company of another."

I [the compiler] say: Bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā's blessed temperament is extremely perceptive and sound, no matter what the issue is and of what level, it certainly has an equal effect on him.

A seeker is corrected for the manner in which he requested for du'ā'

I recall another incident in this regard. A person requested duʿā' for the recovery of a certain person who was ill. Hadrat Wālā asked him: "Are you making this request of your own

accord or did the patient ask you to make this request?" The man replied: "The patient had asked me." Hadrat Wālā said: "But you conveyed it in a manner which shows that you are making the request yourself. There is a world of difference between these two. The patient's personal request has more effect on the heart, and the du'ā' is made with more attention. One must be very particular about these matters. You do not even perceive such emotions!?"

Travelling when a task could be achieved via correspondence

Under the discussion on principles related to bay'ah we learnt that Hadrat Wālā does not permit anyone to undertake a journey solely for the sake of pledging bay'ah. He does not consider such a journey necessary because bay'ah can be realized through correspondence. Similarly, he does not approve of anyone journeying to him solely for du'ā' or for a ta'wīdh. Both these can be acquired through correspondence easily and at a cost of a few cents. In fact, he intentionally does not give ta'wīdh to such persons [who undertake a journey solely for this purpose]. He says to them: "When you return home, you must write to me and request a ta'wīdh." He used to do this so that everyone comes to know of it, in order to put a stop to such journeys, and to save people from unnecessary trouble and cost.

Absence of a public kitchen

Hadrat Wālā does not have any public kitchen for those who come here. Instead, when a request is made by the residents of the Khānqāh, some local people make arrangements for meals for free. There is a lot of ease in this way and both parties are at rest and comfort. Had there been a public kitchen, there would have been a lot of crowding and many would have continued their stay solely for the meals. It would have been difficult to differentiate the genuine seekers from the not so genuine ones.

Subsequently, there was an intelligent and wise student who went out in search of a shaykh. He had imposed certain conditions on himself. One of them was that he would become murīd of a shaykh who does not have a public kitchen because if he has a public kitchen and he has crowds of seekers there, it would be of no consideration because they must certainly be there because of the food. Hadrat Wālā also explains the

wisdom behind it: "If I had a public kitchen here, I would be constantly expecting those who come here to contribute something towards it. Since I do not have it, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* I do not even have whisperings about people making contributions. In fact, any person who gives me a gift against my restrictions and specific limits in this regard, I return the gift with absolute independence." (Hadrat Wālā's restrictions and limits with regard to gifts will – Allāh willing – be detailed in a later section).

An incident related to a Pīr Sāhib

Hadrat Wālā relates the story of a Pīr Sāhib of Sindh in this regard. He says: "This Pīr Sāhib had a public kitchen and fell into debts for six thousand rupees because of it. He came to me to write a letter of intercession on his behalf to a certain person to give him a loan of six thousand rupees. He used to say to me: 'The murīds came and ate all the rotīs, and many of them stayed over for several months without making any contribution.' I asked him: 'You now intend taking a loan from someone. How will you pay back the loan?' He replied: 'I will collect it from my murīds, where else will I get it from?' I thought to myself: 'Māshā Allāh! You are still expecting to receive something from your murīds?! If they were really people who would give, you would not have been in debt in the first place.'" In short, these are the harms of having a public kitchen.

Who would have taken responsibility of the public kitchen?

Hadrat Wālā continues: "Furthermore, who would have taken the responsibility to run and administer the public kitchen? My temperament is of such a nature that I would have been constantly concerned and worried about it, and a type of affliction would have got me. This is because – first of all – I do not place the slightest burden on anyone. Secondly, I do not consider it enough to give the responsibility to others and then absolve myself from them. My attitude in this regard is supported by an incident concerning Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* which I came across in a book. He said to certain special Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* that since the work related to the Caliphate has increased tremendously, it has become difficult for him to carry it out on his own. Therefore, he would take the responsibility of seeing to only the most important matters, and handing over tasks to reliable people. He asked: 'If I hand over

such matters to others, will it be enough to absolve me of supervision of those matters?' They all replied that it would not be enough. Instead, after delegating the tasks to others, it will be necessary for him to check whether they have been carried out correctly or not."

Hadrat Wālā then said: "This is also my decision in this regard. I must continue carrying out a task as long as I can do it on my own. When I can no longer control it, then instead of delegating it to others, I must give it up completely. I have experienced that leaving a task by relying on others to do it in most cases leaves it incomplete. I heard the following about the independence of a certain spiritual master. He does not personally touch any money – whether in the form of notes or coins. Instead, all gifts – whether in cash or items - are placed before him. His attendants then take the gifts and spend or use them wherever necessary. The spiritual master himself remains totally aloof from all arrangements. Since I too am free-loving by nature, I was very much attracted to his practice. I too decided to keep myself aloof from all administrative matters. However, Allāh *taʿālā* steered me that very evening. The youngster who works at home was given wheat which he had to take to Jalālābād and have it ground into flour at a mill. He returned much earlier than usual. I expressed my astonishment at his quick return. He said: "Night was approaching quite fast and I still had to return on foot by walking over two miles. Out of consideration for me, the people at the mill gave me ground flour, and took the wheat and an amount of money for grinding it in exchange." I said: "This transaction is impermissible. If this flour is eaten, everyone will be committing the sin of usury. Go back and return this flour, and have our own wheat ground and come back with it." This incident immediately brought me to attention and I realized the harms of delegating tasks to others. I then thought to myself: The correct way is certainly the one which was of our elders. I must not change that way and I must certainly interfere in matters which concern me."

Food arrangements for guests

After relating these incidents by the way, I return to the original topic of the public kitchen. Although Hadrat Wālā has no arrangements for a public kitchen, guests whom he feels need to be fed are fed with an open-heart. After the arrival of a

train, Hadrat Wālā's workers are instructed to go and ask if there are any guests. In most cases, food is sent to the guests in the Khānqāh. Some guests are called to Hadrat Wālā's house and fed there. But if Hadrat Wālā himself is not hungry, he does not go into unnecessary formalities. He feeds the guests and excuses himself. Sometimes, he does not join the guests in the meal but remains seated with them. If there are guests of different ranks, he emphasises on the workers to give each one his food separately so that if a guest is not comfortable with other guests, he does not feel restricted. Thereafter, if they wish to eat together, it is their choice.

Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sahāranpūrī comes as a guest

Hadrat Wālā treats each guest according to his rank. Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh* came as a guest on one occasion. A person who liked to nitpick counted the number of utensils which were used and said: "Seventy two utensils were used whereas there were only four or five people who partook of the meal." The Maulānā asked: "Why did you go into so much of trouble?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Hadrat himself is the reason for all these formalities. If you come more often, I will not do this. Since you have come after several years, my heart desires to present the best items which are available because I may not get the opportunity again."

Hosting a Nawāb Sāhib

Similarly, a very high ranking Nawāb Sāhib came as a guest. Several types of dishes were prepared for him. Hadrat Wālā excused his formalities by saying: "By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I did not have to purchase anything from outside. Even the chicken is from my yard." Hadrat Wālā added: "Another reason for doing all this is to show you that Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace – has given me sufficient food and drink. In this way, you will be happy and I will not be worried because Allāh *taʿālā* has given me all the means of comfort. I am not in need."

Treatment of madrasah students

Large numbers of students from Deoband and Sahāranpūr come to the Khānqāh during the holidays. If Hadrat Wālā learns that they need money for food, he sends one of his workers to enquire from each of them separately. Those who express a need are assisted with cash money. They remain as guests for several days. Similarly, on many occasions many

senior ‘ulamā’ and trustees of Madāris come for advice on Dīnī matters. They all remain as guests of Hadrat Wālā.

Discretion in hospitality

In short, there is no specific rule in hospitality. Instead, Hadrat Wālā practises on whatever is needed at the time and what is most prudent. On one occasion, a large number of women from a village came to Thānah Bhawan to become mūrīds. They had neither informed Hadrat Wālā of their intention to come nor did they obtain permission from him. Hadrat Wālā’s family became worried about the feeding arrangements for these women. Hadrat Wālā said to his family: “Why are you worrying? Give them the items to be cooked, show them to the stove and tell them to cook their own food.” Consequently, this is exactly what was done. To sum up, Hadrat Wālā’s hospitality is solely according to need and what is most prudent. Hadrat Wālā does not take more trouble than necessary on his head. In fact, he does not allow impositions on his own time even when it comes to hosting special guests. He will pay special attention to such guests for some time, make all arrangements for their rest and comfort, take permission to leave and continue with his work. Hadrat Wālā did the same on the arrival of his respected teacher Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. After making all the necessary arrangements for him, when the time came for him to do his writing work, he respectfully sought his teacher’s permission to leave for a short while to do his writing work. He then returned quickly. In this way, he did not attach himself too much to his work nor did he leave it out for that day.

Consideration for special guests

When he learns of the impending arrival of a special guest, Hadrat Wālā takes the burden of doing more than his normal work so that his essential and necessary tasks can be completed. In this way, when the guest arrives, he can pay more attention to him. He even goes to the extent of giving up his siesta time and deferring his replying to letters in order to converse with the special guests who are about to depart. He then imposes on himself to complete replying to the letters before the final departure of the post. If there is a special need or if he sees it prudent, he gives those who have come for a short stay more opportunities to remain seated with him and

he tries to give them as much Dīnī information according to what their condition requires.

I always observe Hadrat Wālā spending more time in delivering talks to those who have come to stay for a short time. He speaks to them with full enthusiasm and zeal, mentions many unique and beneficial facts to them (even to the extent of delaying the meals). He does this so that they may be satisfied and the path [of Sufism] may be fully proliferated. Hadrat Wālā is extremely desirous of proliferating the path provided it is a gathering of genuine seekers. It is an accepted ruling of this field that a shaykh must be desirous of proliferating the path. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā is most desirous of proliferating it through his own conditions, statements, writings and discourses. His night and day are devoted to it. When there are those who have come for a short stay, then apart from his general assembly after the zuhr salāh, he conducts a special assembly in the morning after having completed his other necessary tasks.

Such persons are informed of the additional assembly and of the time and place where they should assemble. In this way, when the actual time for the assembly arrives, they can all be brought together immediately and it does not become necessary to go to each person individually. We see from this the extreme consideration which Hadrat Wālā shows to the people. However, it is to the limit which is necessary while not imposing on his own time.

Receiving guests

Sometimes, very special, distinguished and honourable guests come to meet him. Hadrat Wālā gets up from his place and embraces them. However, on most of these occasions he prohibits the others who are seated from standing up by saying to them that he is standing up on their behalf. Everyone else should therefore remain seated. This is especially so when it comes to people of worldly honour – he certainly prohibits the others from standing up for them. When it comes to some very special associates, Hadrat Wālā really feels like going to the station to receive them but does not do this because it would cause much shame to such guests.

Abstaining from insisting on guests to stay longer

No matter how distinguished and beloved a guest may be and no matter how much the heart may want him to remain, Hadrat Wālā never insists on anyone to stay longer. In fact, the moment he hears about a guest's intention to depart, he immediately says: "Do whatever is best for you." Yes, there are times when he is quite informal with a person, so he would say jokingly to him: "This cannot even be considered to be a visit. It was just a passing." If the person seems to be unmindful of the impending departure to the railway station, then – contrary to his norm – Hadrat Wālā reminds the person so that in the case where he misses the train he does not have to remain behind against his wish or to rue over missing the train.

Prerequisites and regulations for those who present themselves

If a seeker who has already been given a general permission to come and go seeks another special permission as a precaution, then Hadrat Wālā permits him provided the journey is not going to impose on him in any way, he does not have to take a loan for the journey and he would not be trampling on anyone's rights in the process. A woman wrote to Hadrat Wālā and expressed her intense desire to come and meet him. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "I give you permission provided your husband brings you happily, you'll do not have to take any loans to come, it will not cause any inconvenience to you, you do not impose on him to bring you and there will be no shortcomings as regards purdah and performing salāh during the journey."

Those who are present are forbidden from reprimanding newcomers

Hadrat Wālā emphasises that when any newcomer commits an offence, no one in the Khānqāh may reprimand him and no one is to give him advice without having asked for it. He says in this regard: "Am I not enough to reprimand anyone? I reprimand and scold quite a bit. If others were to reprimand him as well, the poor fellow will get distressed. Furthermore, scolding from every other person cannot be tolerated. Anyway, my scolding does not cause so much of displeasure because people come here specifically because of me. If others were to reprimand and scold them, it will certainly break their heart. This is something which I can never tolerate. Furthermore, every person does not know how to advise and counsel others."

"Another harm is that if others were to reprimand the newcomers, the latter would consider the former to be my close associates and feel intimidated by them. In addition to this, they will make them intermediaries for their needs. They will also give them gifts and other things in order to win them over as intermediaries. This will open thousands of doors of corruption for both parties. It will be harmful to me as well because when I see so many helpers and supporters, my head will also become bloated [I will feel proud over having so many helpers]. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, at present I do not consider anyone to be my assistant and helper. My gaze is not on anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. This is not something for me to say but since we are on this subject, I am saying that I consider myself to be completely alone in this world. I do not consider anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* to be mine. I am all alone in this world, and this solitary man has just one Being with him, and no one else."

"People normally rely on their attendants and close associates. I do not rely on anyone. I do not consider anyone to be my beloved, helper and supporter. One of the reasons for my "dryness" is that I do not want to make anyone my beloved. In this way, I can freely interact with every person in a manner which is suited to him. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I do not even experience a whispering of thinking to myself: "Do not treat the person in this manner, he may give up supporting me." I am not saying this as a claim, in fact, I even fear saying it: Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows how true and factual this is. I am not saying something which is factual according to me. May Allāh *taʿālā* pardon me if there is any shortcoming in this regard. Just as every person will depart alone when he dies, I consider myself to be absolutely alone even before death. I do not consider anyone to be with me."

Hadrat Wālā also said: "The basis for what I am saying is that Allāh *taʿālā* alone has – through His grace and kindness – preserved this condition of mine. He fulfils my need from the unseen at the exact time when I need it. He provides the means for my comfort from avenues which I never even thought of. This is why I can continue and maintain my attitude of independence and freedom. If I ever fell into need, all my independence would have disappeared and my freedom vanished."

I [the compiler] say: Glory to Allāh! What a lofty condition! An unqualified person like me to express my opinion in this regard is similar to displaying a lamp before the sun. Look at his distinguished status despite spending night and day in the service of Allāh's creation. Look at the overwhelming self-obliteration with the intense bond with Allāh *taʿālā*. Wonder at his absolute servitude and his independence from all apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. Such personalities actually combine opposites and are manifestations of the Hadīth:

موتوا قبل أن تموتوا

Die before your actual deaths.

A poet says:

> This fortune cannot be acquired by physical strength. It is only and solely a bestowal from Allāh *taʿālā*.

This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

Etiquette of meeting and speaking

This point contains matters pertaining to the etiquette of meeting, speaking, sitting in an assembly and so on. These are mentioned as examples. Hadrat Wālā considers them to be the responsibility of the visitors because they [etiquette] are natural and do not need any instruction from anyone. This is why he considers shortcomings in this regard to be most displeasing. He always says: "These are absolutely general principles which every person ought to consider when he interacts with every other person."

Enquiring about visiting hours

Hadrat Wālā says: "When a person goes to meet a person for the first time, he must enquire about the visiting times and other necessary points from those who are residing there. Only then must he go to meet the person."

Visitors must ascertain the best time and place of meeting the moment they arrive

Hadrat Wālā did not set aside any specific time for a first visit so that visitors do not have to wait. As a principle, they must meet him soon after they arrive. When Hadrat Wālā sees a stranger, he waits to be introduced to him. A person came and

did not meet Hadrat Wālā at all. Hadrat Wālā remained doubtful each time he saw the man. When he shook hands with Hadrat Wālā at the time of his departure, he expressed his severe displeasure to the man and prohibited him from coming back or from corresponding with him. When the man sought pardon via another person, Hadrat Wālā granted him permission to come back on condition that his bond of rectification will have to be established by one of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā'. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "When mistakes are committed in such basic and obvious matters, how can there be mutual affinity?"

In short, newcomers must meet Hadrat Wālā soon after arrival provided he is available to meet and not resting or occupied in some other important task. The person must gauge the situation and then go to meet him. If he sees Hadrat Wālā busy, he must sit down. He must not remain standing while waiting for him because this demonstrates a type of demand which weighs heavily on the heart.

Introduce yourself immediately after greeting: Once a person greets Hadrat Wālā, he must introduce himself completely. If he had corresponded with Hadrat Wālā before his arrival, he must present the last letter which he had written to him. The person must remain seated when speaking to him. The person must speak clearly and audibly so that Hadrat Wālā can hear him easily. He must say in full whatever he has to say. He must not speak in half measures and expect Hadrat Wālā to ask him the remaining subject matter. Hadrat Wālā himself commences by saying: "Say whatever you have to say." He does this so that a stranger may open up and feel free to speak. However, this does not mean that once a person commences speaking about himself, he must expect Hadrat Wālā to ask him questions to continue. He must answer questions immediately. It is most disturbing to him when there is a delay in answering questions. If he does not know what answer to give, he must say: "I will think about it and give an answer later on." Most newcomers do not answer questions despite asking them repeatedly. They just remain silent. Hadrat Wālā asks them to leave, saying: "If you cannot answer my questions, what is the benefit of remaining seated here?" In fact, if such a person vexes Hadrat Wālā more, then he does not even permit him to attend his assemblies because sitting near such a person also disturbs him. When some people are

asked to leave, they go and stand behind the wall. Hadrat Wālā does not permit this also because it is just like sitting in the assembly. In fact, it is a type of deception and a form of spying which is prohibited.

Mistakes must be acknowledged immediately

This point is also very noteworthy. If a person errs, he must acknowledge it immediately without resorting to any excuses and explanations. If he is asked the reason for it – as is the habit of Hadrat Wālā in most cases – the person must express the actual reason. Hadrat Wālā asks for the reason in order to ascertain whether the person has understood the reality of his mistake or not. If a person cannot provide the actual reason, Hadrat Wālā continues posing one question after another, and refutes – with proofs – the person's fictional answers such as claiming ignorance, stupidity, misunderstanding and so on. Hadrat Wālā's proofs are so clear and sensible that the person is compelled to accept them. Since most of the mistakes are silly and obvious, they are inevitably committed due to lack of concern. And lack of concern stems from insufficient respect and reverence. Hadrat Wālā complains about this most of the time and gives the example of rulers and says: "Why do they not commit the same mistakes in the presence of rulers? The reason is that a desire and respect for the world is in the heart, but not for Dīn."

Presenting a letter

If a person has to present a letter or note, he must place it in front and say: "Please see this note." He must not continue holding it in his hands because this would impose on him to drop it the moment he has to do some other task with his hands.

Presenting a letter and shaking hands at the same time

If a person has to present a note and shake hands as well, he must first shake hands and then present his note or letter. Some people extended their hands while holding a note in their hands. Hadrat Wālā was severely discomforted by this because he did not know what the person wanted to do – did he want to present his note or did he want to shake hands? Others removed their notes from their pockets and when Hadrat Wālā was about to receive the note from them, they extended their hands to shake hands with him. This also discomforted him.

Explaining the reason for one's visit

A person must clearly explain the reason for his visit. If a person was travelling for some other purpose and he just stopped by to meet Hadrat Wālā, he must make mention of this as well. Some people portray as if they have undertaken a very lengthy journey and state that they intend remaining for a very short while. Hadrat Wālā immediately realizes that something is not right. After posing a few questions to the person, he learns that the man had come to a nearby place for some work. While there, he felt like coming to meet Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā says on such occasions: "Only burden me with that amount of the journey which a person had to travel to meet me. He must not portray as if he undertook a very long journey, and that too, for such a short stay."

Complete information about the reason for coming must be provided

Hadrat Wālā is not satisfied as long as a person does not provide full information about himself and the actual purpose for coming to him. He needs to know this so that he can treat the person accordingly. There were some people who appeared to be distinguished people. Despite Hadrat Wālā's inquiries, they did not provide full information about themselves. Hadrat Wālā clearly said to them: "I do not have any personal motive. I like to obtain information about you for your own good. If you are not going to introduce yourself adequately, you have the right to so. However, in such a case, I too will treat you solely according to my rules. I will therefore be excused in this regard."

The story of a Ra'īs

An aged and knowledgeable Ra'īs did the same thing. He did not provide adequate information about himself despite Hadrat Wālā's inquiries. Hadrat Wālā said the same thing to him as quoted above. Although Hadrat Wālā obtained more information about him later on through other people, he did not accord any special attention to him. Hadrat Wālā did not request him to sit in a distinguished place in his assembly, as he normally does to such people. After having lived in the Khānqāh for about seven to ten days, the man provided full information about himself via a note which he wrote to Hadrat Wālā. Only then did Hadrat Wālā accord special attention to him and requested him to sit in a distinguished place in his

assembly. We see from all this that Hadrat Wālā's distinguishing quality is to maintain every matter within its limit and to practise according to what it demands. He does not allow his temperament to have the better of wisdom and intelligence.

The order to be present at meal times

Those who have been informed by Hadrat Wālā that he will see to their meals must remain in the Khānqāh at meal times so that no one has to go out in search for them.

Visitors becoming friendly with each other

Hadrat Wālā never approves of the establishing of any bond or contact between visitors and those who are residing in the Khānqāh. He wants the Khānqāh to have the following atmosphere [as described in a couplet]:

> Paradise is the place where there is no discomfort,
> and no one is in need of another for anything.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the attention of Hadrat Wālā, this is the atmosphere in the Khānqāh. If some people have had any contact from before, they are not prohibited from meeting and interacting according to the need. However, he disapproves of them meeting and interacting too much, engaging in futile conversations and wasting time. He said on one occasion: "I want each and every person to remain occupied in his own work. In fact, I desire that no one must speak to another unnecessarily."

I [the compiler] say: Hadrat Shaykh Akbar *rahimahullāh* concluded his book, *Prerequisites which must be abided by those who are treading the path of Allāh*, with the following prerequisite:

لا يترك الشيخ المريدين يجتمعون أصلا دونه إلا إذا جمعهم بحضرته ومتى تركهم يجتمعون دونه فقد أساء في حقهم.

A shaykh must never permit his murīds to assemble on their own without him being there. If he permits them to assemble on their own, he has faltered in fulfilling their rights.

The residents of the Khānqāh are specifically prohibited from interacting with newcomers, especially rulers and seniors. In fact, some people were reprimanded and scolded for doing this,

while attention to this fact was drawn to others in a general address [without directing it at any one in particular]. Bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā leads a very independent life, he desires his associates to live in the same manner.

However, animosity and impoliteness are not permitted. For residents of the Khānqāh to make a practice of getting together to have their meals or to invite each other is also against the rules of the Khānqāh. They are strictly prohibited from establishing contact with the local residents. A resident of the Khānqāh – like a few others who had left the hometowns forever and came to live in the Khānqāh – was strictly prohibited from going out of the Khānqāh. He too upheld this prohibition to such an extent that he did not go out for several years. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he recently got the opportunity of emigrating to Madīnah and is now residing there.

Etiquette of serving

Service should not be accepted unnecessarily

Hadrat Wālā cannot tolerate accepting any service from anyone for as long as his heart is not opened towards him. In fact, he would very rarely and only for very light tasks make a request for a service from a person towards whom his heart has opened. But if a person hastens to fulfil a service on his own, Hadrat Wālā does not stop him. At the same time, he cannot bear for someone to submit himself before him except on very rare occasions. Hadrat Wālā says: "It is good to do some of your work yourself." He also complains: "Some people's service is no service. It is a disservice because they do not even know how to render it. For example, someone brought istinjā'[1] water which was extremely hot. I only came to know of it when I began pouring it. Since my body had already become wet, I could not come out and wait for the water to cool to a moderate temperature. I had to endure a lot of difficulty in blowing the water to cool it, and then washed myself. This certainly caused me hardship. Similarly, some people offer very hot or boiling water for wudū'. This is why I ask for two separate water-cans, one hot and the other cold. In this way, I can mix it as I like. I

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[1] Istinjā' refers to the act of washing one's private parts after having relieved one's self.

ask for a full can of hot water and a half can of cold water. In this way, I can pour the hot water into the cold water until the desired temperature. Yet others start swinging the veranda fan without even knowing how to do it. If a person gets up to leave, the one swinging the fan does not stop and the poor fellow gets hurt. The one whom I permitted to swing the fan has been instructed to immediately release the rope completely the moment anyone gets up to leave so that there is no possibility whatsoever of anyone getting hurt. If he were to continue holding the rope, there is the possibility of it slipping from his hand and the fan striking the person in his head. Secondly – and this happens quite often – the person who is leaving cannot gauge correctly for how long the one swinging the fan will hold the rope back and to what extent. Thus, there is always the possibility of the person getting hurt; and there were times when people really did get hurt. Furthermore, if the person continues holding the rope, it gives the impression that the person who is leaving must leave quickly because he may continue swinging the fan. However, in the case of releasing the rope completely, the person who is leaving may do so easily and freely. There is no possibility whatsoever of getting hurt."

"There are many examples of this nature. How much more can I speak about them? Furthermore, each person's temperament, disposition and habits are different. Only a person who has full knowledge can know which manner of serving will bring comfort. In addition to this, I do not know whether the person will carry out the service sincerely because later we learn that some people had certain motives in serving. Moreover, I find it difficult to accept service from 'ulamā', sayyids[1] and old people."

No one must feel imposed through service

Hadrat Wālā says: "I want each and every one to be occupied in his respective task. They must not unnecessarily impose on me in order to serve me. In this way, they are free to do what they have to, and I am also free. This is because freedom is a great bounty. Freedom is the essence of my temperament. Whether it is humiliation or reverence – if either of the two cause any disturbance in my freedom or the freedom of anyone else, it disturbs me. This ought to be the temperament of every

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[1] The family of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.*

Muslim – that is, he must be free from everyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. How can servitude to Allāh *taʿālā* be combined with servitude to the creation?"

One wisdom behind not accepting service

Hadrat Wālā explains one of the reasons behind not accepting service from people: "No one must assume that he is close or special to me. This contains many harms for the person himself and for others as well. Another harm of it is that when a person renders his service, he assumes that he has fulfilled his duty and does not occupy himself in his tasks [of reformation and rectification which have been given to him]."

The story of a villager

One day after the ʿishā salāh when Hadrat Wālā was about to proceed to his house, a villager took Hadrat Wālā's shoes and placed them before him so that it would easy for him to put them on. Hadrat Wālā has two pairs of shoes, one rugged pair which he wears when walking out in the fields in the morning; and another ordinary pair which he wears around the house. The villager placed the pair which Hadrat Wālā did not normally wear at night. Hadrat Wālā had to himself bear the trouble of getting the other pair. Hadrat Wālā said: "O brother! A person who is not aware of my habits must not render any service. Now look at the inconvenience which your service caused! Of what benefit is such a service? This is why I find more comfort in carrying out my tasks on my own. How can a person who is not aware of my habits render any service?"

The same man had brought Hadrat Wālā's shoes the previous night and placed them for him. On that occasion, all he told him when he was leaving was: "Oh! You have carried out such a heavy task. You should have rather carried some heavy goods from 10-20 miles. O brother! Do you call this any service? You should have done something which brings comfort. Do you think I could not bring my shoes on my own?" The next night, the person did the same thing as described above.

While proceeding to his house, Hadrat Wālā said: "Customs have overwhelmed the hearts in such a manner that they cannot give them up. The man merely saw everyone else picking up my shoes and placing them before me, so he decided to do the same. It was merely a custom which he was carrying out. I also feel ashamed at the fact that when a person

renders a service out of love, why should I stop him? But what can I do? It disturbs me severely and wasting even a single minute is burdensome to me. Yes, the one who likes to be served all the time, he may continue bothering about it. Now look, I am carrying a book to my house. I will be spending the night writing. The man's service caused all this inconvenience and my time getting wasted is another matter. I have explained this matter to him. Tomorrow he will depart. Another new person will arrive and I will have to start the entire process again. Must I spend all my time teaching these things? Certain things are very easy to do but difficult to explain to others." I [the compiler] too have rendered the service of placing shoes. Hadrat Wālā said to me: "There is no need to adhere to this service. I do not want to impose on anyone nor do I want to be restricted. By Allāh's grace, there are many to serve me. There is no need for you to do it. You must occupy yourself in the task for which you came here. This is what I find comfort in. In fact, when anyone serves me, it causes me more inconvenience."

Obtaining permission to serve

Bearing in mind the above teachings, those towards whom Hadrat Wālā's heart has opened must not hasten in serving him. They must obtain permission from him first. Hadrat Wālā himself says this repeatedly. As for those towards whom Hadrat Wālā's heart has not opened as yet, they must not render any service at all. In fact, they must not even ask for permission because Hadrat Wālā is severely disturbed and displeased by the service of such people. He emphatically stops them from it. Sometimes, he grants permission out of kindness but if he is discomforted thereafter, he has to prohibit the person.

Do not insist on serving

When Hadrat Wālā stops a person from serving him, the person must stop immediately. He is severely disturbed when anyone insists. Insisting is also unmannerly. A person insisted on carrying Hadrat Wālā's shoes, so he said to him: "Very well, you may carry them but I will certainly not wear them. I will walk barefoot to my house." The man only desisted when the matter reached this point. Hadrat Wālā's prohibitions are not restricted to this one matter only. When he says something, it must be carried out immediately. Do not wait for him to say it

again and again because he does not say anything merely out of formality. When he says something, he says it after having thought about it seriously. He says something which is certain – there can be no change and alteration in it. To insist is therefore absolutely futile. In fact, it is harmful to both parties and causes ill-feeling on both sides. Some people, by nature, do not carry out an instruction unless they are told repeatedly. They delay in carrying it out in the hope that the instruction will become lax and they will only carry it out once it is lax. This is a most harmful trait.

Hadrat Wālā's needs are few

Hadrat Wālā says: "I have restricted my needs to such an extent that I can fulfil them by myself. I am not in need of anyone. Nowadays, I have given up taking any service from such and such people because I had always been discomforted by them. Initially they had many responsibilities and one of them was also a paid worker. All praise is due to Allāh, I never experienced any restriction despite many months having passed since taking any work from them. By virtue of the fact that I am free loving by nature, my needs are very few, and I can fulfil them by myself."

The etiquette of looking at a person

The prohibition of staring at a person repeatedly

Most newcomers stare at Hadrat Wālā's movements to such an extent that he himself becomes aware of it. This is most inappropriate because the person who is being stared at becomes self-conscious, there is a difference in his freedom and it weighs on his heart. On these occasions, Hadrat Wālā expresses his displeasure by saying: "Is there something strange or funny that you are staring at me like that?" If a person really has a desire to look at him, he must look in such a way that Hadrat Wālā does not perceive anyone staring at him or paying particular attention to him.

Turning around to look at Hadrat Wālā

Similarly, some people who are sitting in the front row continually look back at Hadrat Wālā or stand up for him when he is entering the musjid and proceeding to the front. They do this to make way for him. Hadrat Wālā is severely disturbed and annoyed by this as well. He says: "No changes must take

place as a result of my arrival. Each person must continue sitting as he had been. I detest it severely when there is a clamour or commotion merely because of my arrival. No attention must be given to making way for me."

"I will enter as I wish and proceed to the front from wherever I like. If there is no place, I will place my hand on the shoulders of people and point to them to lean slightly forward, and allow me to move forward in this way."

He also says: "I do this to save them from discomfort. Sometimes I myself am discomforted because I see a gap to move forward and head in that direction, while the person who is seated shifts slightly in the direction of the gap and wants to give me place from the other side. I now have to change my intention and sometimes still fail because that place too falls away in the same manner."

"In short, it causes a lot of confusion. Looking for a way out should therefore be left to me. I will take a path which I feel is most appropriate. I do not want to be inconvenienced myself nor do I want anyone to be inconvenienced because of me. At the same time, I should not be treated in a manner which shows that I have a high status. This also stresses me. Similarly, when I enter the musjid to lead the people in salāh, some people walk behind me unnecessarily. I am very annoyed by it firstly because it gives the impression that people were waiting in the musjid for my arrival. Waiting for a person in such a manner is a futile act. The second reason why I do not like anyone to walk behind me is that if I find a need to go back, I will feel restricted knowing the fact that a group of people are walking behind me, I will have to disrupt them and cause them inconvenience."

"Moreover, it appears wrong to enter a musjid while people are walking behind me because it is a form of status and superiority. Some people take unlawful benefit from walking behind me because they occupy the places which were left empty for me to walk through. People leave these empty places for me despite my prohibiting them from doing so. Those who walk behind me and occupy these empty places have no right whatsoever to do so because they arrived much later than those who were already in the musjid. Furthermore, since the place is quite cramped, by these people walking with me and occupying those places, they cause it to become even more

cramped. Some people come to shake hands with me at the exact time when I enter the musjid and proceed forward to perform the salāh. This delays me. Sometimes there is very little time so I intend reaching the front quickly, but these people think of shaking hands with me and delay me further. When I complete my salāh, I remain seated and occupy myself in certain forms of dhikr. Some people also remain seated with the sole intention of waiting to meet me. This causes me to lose my focus in my dhikr. On one occasion, a person tried to shake hands with me while I was engaged in my dhikr. When he saw that I was not paying any attention to me, he said: "I want to shake hands." I too – without turning to him – said: "I am busy in dhikr." I am extremely cautious about disturbing anyone when they are engaged in their dhikr because the spiritual masters have written that Allāh *taʿālā* is severely offended by this because a servant of Allāh is focussed on Him and another person is diverting that focus away from Him."

"Some people come and sit behind me while I am occupied in dhikr. I thoroughly rectified one person in this regard. He came and sat down behind me. So I got up and went and sat down behind him. When he was about to get up, I reprimanded him saying: "No one should dare get up from his place." He was very embarrassed but could do nothing about it. He was forced to remain seated. In the meantime, I took my time in reading my different forms of dhikr and continued in this way for a long time. I only permitted him to get up and leave when I completed all my dhikr. I asked him: "Were you discomforted in any way?" He replied: "Yes, I was severely discomforted but I continued sitting out of fear." I said: "I am also discomforted when anyone sits behind me." He said: "But you are a Buzurg." I said: "You are also a Buzurg because you are a Muslim, and I consider every Muslim to be a Buzurg. Beware of ever doing this again."

After issuing warnings of this nature, Hadrat Wālā says: "These are all annoying and uncultured actions. They ought to be borne in mind – not only here but everywhere else."

Greeting

Hadrat Wālā does not like seekers to convey salām, messages, letters, gifts, etc. on behalf of others – especially those with whom Hadrat Wālā is not informal. Some people bring gifts and letters of some of Hadrat Wālā's special associates and use this

as a means to gain proximity to Hadrat Wālā and to receive special treatment from him. Others are only concerned about conveying salāms of others while not worried in the least about their own rectification. They feel they have fulfilled the rights of a bond with Hadrat Wālā. If those who are fully occupied in their own rectification convey the salāms or messages of others occasionally, there is no harm in it.

Interceding

The seekers are not permitted to bring any letter of intercession from anyone nor should they request anyone to intercede on their behalf. There is no use in intercession in matters of Dīn because Hadrat Wālā will treat each person in a manner which is suited to him. An intercession means that the person wants to impress on Hadrat Wālā to treat him in a manner which the person himself desires. Neither does a seeker have such a right nor will acting according to his wishes be of any benefit to him. Hadrat Wālā is not impressed by such intercessions. In fact, in most cases he returns such intercessions without fulfilling them. He does this so that both the person and the one who interceded on his behalf will realize the needlessness of this action, its uselessness, and in fact, its harm. Furthermore, it will put an end to future intercessions.

A person repeatedly requested bayʿah through the intercession of another person, and Hadrat Wālā refused repeatedly. But when the person wrote his own letter directly, Hadrat Wālā accepted with the first letter which he received.

Presenting gifts

Newcomers and all others towards whom Hadrat Wālā's heart has not opened fully must not present any type of gift to him. If a person really wants to give him a gift, he must obtain permission first. If Hadrat Wālā refuses because the prerequisites for presenting gifts have not been fulfilled, the person must never insist. The prerequisites and etiquette of gifts will – Allāh willing – be explained further on.

Etiquette of the assembly

Being aware of the times of the assembly

Nowadays, the general assembly commences after zuhr and ends at the time of the ʿasr adhān. This is mentioned in the time-table which is pasted on the wall outside the assembly

room. No one is to go to Hadrat Wālā apart for meetings on arrival and before departure. If a special assembly is being conducted in the morning, one should not attend without having obtained special permission. If a person has to meet him on arrival or departure during the times of the assembly, he must meet him, introduce himself, explain the object of his arrival clearly, and leave the assembly immediately.

Do not sit in reserved places

There is a small corner near where Hadrat Wālā sits. This place is reserved for those who have something to say to him or meet him. Some people began sitting here permanently. So Hadrat Wālā reprimanded them by saying: "You ought to have realized that if this place is empty, it must be for some reason. People are already sitting everywhere from before hand, why are they not sitting here? It is against the etiquette of the assembly not to think of such matters."

In short, no one must sit permanently in the reserved place near Hadrat Wālā. A person may say whatever he has to say to him, meet him and then proceed to sit where everyone else is sitting.

Do not constrict those who are seated

At the same time, do not sit in such a way that you constrict those who are already seated from before hand. Furthermore, no one must be made to get up or move from his place. If there is an empty place near, do not go and sit further away unnecessarily.

Do not sit far away if there is place at the front

Some people sit at a distance even when there is place at the front, or, if a place in front of them becomes vacant, they remain seated in the back. Hadrat Wālā drew the attention of the people to this by saying: "You are sitting in a manner which will intimidate a newcomer. He will think to himself: 'This is a very intimidating assembly, no one has the courage to sit nearby.' Now, what, do you want to make me appear like a wolf before people?"

Do not sit completely next to each other

A few uncouth people came to meet Hadrat Wālā at the wrong time and then sat down very close to each other. Hadrat Wālā

said: “If you show respect, you go to the limit of formalities and make a show of it. If you are informal, you go to the limit of doing foolish things. The minds have become so distorted that there seems to be no moderation whatsoever except in a few people. People either commit excesses or shortcomings. Whereas Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَّسَطًا

In this way did We make you a balanced nation.

The above verse is supported by the following narrations:

خير الأمور أوسطها

The best matters are the balanced ones.

وخير الأعمال أوسطها (كلاهما في المقاصد الحسنة، والأول في كنوز الحقائق أيضا، وهما يصلحان للتأييد وإن لم يثبت سندهما).

The best deeds are the balanced ones.

A sound temperament also demands moderation and a balance.

Special people must sit in their special places

In the course of the assembly, the western section of the assembly area is reserved for special people. Only those whom Hadrat Wālā asks to sit in that place may sit there, or those who know from before hand that Hadrat Wālā normally seats them there. In fact, the latter people must sit there without being told. They must not hesitate because when Hadrat Wālā learns that they are sitting with everyone else, he has to ask them to leave and sit in the designated place. Even if the place in the designated area is less, he jokingly says to them: “Come here – Allāh willing – you will get a place to sit.”

A tasbīh is not to be read in front of Hadrat Wālā

When you consider a person to be more senior to you, it is disrespectful to sit with a tasbīh before him and to read over it in a displaying manner because it smacks of a claim. A person should therefore not sit in front of Hadrat Wālā with a tasbīh. He should either do it by covering it with a cloth or engage in verbal dhikr [without a tasbīh]. Once Hadrat Wālā commences saying anything in his assembly, verbal dhikr should also stop.

Instead, he must focus himself to listen attentively to his words. At the same time, as mentioned above, he should not stare at Hadrat Wālā – neither in the course of his discourses nor at any other time. Staring at a person causes a heavy weight on him and he is no longer free with his actions and doings. He cannot remain focussed because he is constantly thinking that this person is looking at me all the time.

Do not converse with each other

It is against the etiquette of an assembly to engage in conversations with each other. Hadrat Wālā constantly prohibits it. He says: "If anyone wishes to talk, he may leave the assembly and talk outside." If you have to say something absolutely essential, do not say it in whispers. Instead say it in a tone which Hadrat Wālā can also hear. Do not whisper nor shout out. Speak openly in a balanced tone.

The addressee must remain attentive

When it comes to general teachings, Hadrat Wālā directs himself to the special people who are present. The one who is addressed must pay particular attention. He must show his approval to points which are laudable and he may even express his verbal approval if the occasion warrants it. Hadrat Wālā says that this is from among the etiquette of an address. If not, if a person remains silent, dumb and unperceptive, the speaker will not know whether his addressee is understanding what is being said or not. If this happens, the speaker's thought processes and subject matter cease.

The addressee must not speak unnecessarily

Similarly, Hadrat Wālā says that one of the etiquette of being addressed is that whatever the person hears, he must listen to it as if he is hearing it for the first time. He must do this so that the speaker does not feel dispirited.

Even if a person has been permitted to speak, he must not speak unnecessarily. He must allow Hadrat Wālā to do most of the talking so that those who are present in the assembly may have the opportunity of listening more to his words. After all, this is why they came to the assembly. I have personally noticed people becoming fed up when others speak too much. Apart from this act being against the etiquette of an assembly,

Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* considers it to be against the path of love.

Do not pose unrelated questions

While Hadrat Wālā is speaking, a person should not interject with rational questions, he should abstain from unrelated questions and must not present any objections. All these things spoil the enjoyment of a talk and the subject matter stops flowing. If a person has to ask something essential about the talk, he may do so in a dignified manner at the end provided he has received permission to address Hadrat Wālā from before hand.

Abstain from unnecessary hand and leg movements

While sitting in the assembly, a person must not move his hands and legs unnecessarily. This is a habit of some people especially those studying Western knowledge. I myself had committed this offence on one occasion. While I was seated, I began shaking my legs. Hadrat Wālā warned me immediately and said: "This is against the etiquette of an assembly. If everyone in this assembly were to shake their legs simultaneously in this manner, it will feel as if an earthquake is taking place. Particular attention must be given to discarding this habit. Apart from it being a useless action, it smacks of imitating free-thinking people."

Do not touch anything

If someone nearby has got a certain item placed in front of him, do not touch it unnecessarily. Some people have a bad habit of touching and playing around with such items. One should also abstain from looking around and observing all the items which are present in the assembly room. This is against the etiquette of an assembly. Special care must be given to abstaining from it.

Etiquette of walking on the road

1. Do not shake hands on the road: Do not shake hands or engage in conversations on the road. If Hadrat Wālā appears before you incidentally, there is no harm in offering salām to him.

2. Do not address anyone from behind: It is most uncultured to address a person from behind. Hadrat Wālā says

in this regard: "Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* advised Hadrat Imām Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* thus: 'If anyone addresses you from behind, you must not respond because he has in fact belittled you and it is as if he considers you to be an animal. Only animals are addressed from behind.'"

3. No one should join unnecessarily: Hadrat Wālā disapproves of anyone joining him unnecessarily while he is walking. This is because a person is no longer free to walk as he wants. Hadrat Wālā was overjoyed when he found a support for this attitude of his in *Tabaqāt Kubrā*. It states that Hadrat Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* would not allow anyone to accompany him while walking on a road.

Apart from the person feeling restricted, another disadvantage of it is that due to requests from his companions, Hadrat Wālā leaves the good level roads for stony and rough paths. It inconveniences him and sometimes his legs slip into the side drains, causing him further harm. When this occurred several times, Hadrat Wālā forced himself to give up this practice. However, acting against one's temperament is discomforting and sometimes a person forgets.

4. No one is to walk behind: Hadrat Wālā dislikes anyone walking behind him. He says: "If I have to stop suddenly – for whatever reason – the person behind me will knock into me."

Hadrat Wālā also disapproves of anyone stopping because of Hadrat Wālā or slowing his pace. He prefers a person to continue at his own pace, and once he reaches Hadrat Wālā, he must move to one side and proceed on his way. Hadrat Wālā is most happy and comforted by this informality. But if a person is too respectful and does not want to move ahead, he may remain behind but at a considerable distance so that Hadrat Wālā does not hear his footsteps. Hearing anyone approaching from behind causes him a lot of anxiety.

In short, a person must not accompany Hadrat Wālā on any path. However, if Hadrat Wālā himself joins a person or starts talking to him, it is another matter. Apart from feeling restricted when a person walks with him, Hadrat Wālā prefers walking alone because it gives him a rest from his many occupations. If people join him in his walks also, when will he get a breather? Consequently, if he is walking or engaged in some form of dhikr and someone disturbs him, he becomes

angry and says: “Do you people not fear Allāh? You cannot give a person any peace!? You do not even allow him to carry out his spiritual practices with peace? You are prepared to surround him when he is walking also? Is there any end to this injustice? Must I remain occupied in your work all the time? Can I not have any time for my own work?”

In most cases, Hadrat Wālā ponders and reflects over difficult and intricate rulings while walking. This is also one of the reasons he does not like to be disturbed. He says occasionally: “Allāh *taʿālā* placed the solution to such and such ruling in my heart while I was walking and passing by the house of such and such person. Such and such matter came to my understanding at such and such place in the field where I was walking. Such and such objection was solved when I was near the lane. I returned immediately to note it down so that I do not forget it. I then went back to complete my Qur’ān recitation [which he had been reciting while walking] and finish my walk.”

There are times when Hadrat Wālā continues working until close to maghrib time. He then proceeds on his path while reading a newspaper or an article. People can see that no time of his goes to waste. If a person is so occupied all the time, he will obviously be displeased by any type of inappropriate or inopportune disturbance. Everyone must therefore bear this in mind. They must not occupy him with their work at the wrong times and places. Anyway, bearing this in mind will not harm them because Hadrat Wālā has set aside specific times to see to everyone’s needs. No one’s work will remain unfinished. Obviously, if a person feels that he has come after calculating his time and so on, and that his work must be carried out by Hadrat Wālā immediately, then it means that a person who is in need wants to subdue the one on whom he is dependent. No one enjoys such right anywhere.

Etiquette of departure

1. Method of departure: Like the initial meeting on arrival, there is no special time to meet Hadrat Wālā when departing. However, when a person comes to bid him farewell, he must immediately state that he is leaving because mere greeting and shaking hands could mean that the person has just arrived or he is departing. Each meeting has different demands and effects, and could cause confusion and doubt.

2. Do not present any need at the time of departure: A person should not make a request for a taʿwīdh or any other need at the exact time of departure. This must be done much before so that Hadrat Wālā does not experience any restriction due to a lack of time. Some people made such requests when there was no time. Hadrat Wālā expressed his disapproval and refused to accede to the request saying: "This means that whenever you order – whether I have the time or not – I must immediately leave all my other work and carry out your order. Is this how a person with whom you have work must be restricted?"

The consequence of moral degeneration

Hadrat Wālā said: It is very sad to see how much people's character has degenerated. Some people come here and make me feel as if they have come especially to meet me and that they had no other reason. Whereas they had come for their own worldly engagements. I consider them to be my guests and treat them as such. Later on their actual purpose is exposed and I feel very grieved. The evil is that people do not speak clearly and frankly. Their character has degenerated so there is no transparency in their dealings. The reason why they must mention their purpose of coming is that different rules apply to guests and different rules to travellers. Seeing to the needs of a guest is the responsibility of a specific person [the host]. On the other hand, a person who has come for his own work and then stops over is considered to be a traveller and it is the responsibility of everyone to host him."

The prohibition of voicing opinions in an assembly

"I have laid down a rule in the Khānqāh that a person should neither strengthen his friendship with anyone nor make any enemies. At the same time, no one should engage anyone in an assembly where all and sundry voice their opinions. This is the root of all corruption."

How to benefit from the spiritual masters

I feel strongly about seclusion and although it may appear that meeting with the spiritual masters will always be better than seclusion, nowadays I occasionally advise my associates saying: 'Some people are extremely desirous of meeting the spiritual masters. They spend most of their time travelling – going to one spiritual master today and to another one

tomorrow.' I say to them: 'Do not go too much to meet them. Appoint one as your spiritual master and remain attached to him. And do not go too often to him also. Instead, stay with him once for a long time and then remain in your house. You must then go to meet him once a year. Do not even go every month to meet him.'"

Do not go too often to your shaykh

"I say: Do not even go too often to your shaykh. Do not cling to him too much. If you go occasionally at specific times, you will see him occupied in dhikr, you will see him in a state of sedateness and seriousness. This will increase your faith and confidence in him. But if you cling to him all the time, you will see him passing stool sometimes, urinating some times, spitting at other times and sniffing sometimes. This will decrease your confidence in him. Yes, the confidence of intelligent people increases by witnessing these conditions because they will realize that the shaykh is not an angel, he is a human. And since he is not committing sins despite being a human, he is on a level of perfection. As for a person who is dim-witted, he may witness the shaykh arguing and fighting with his wife. This will decrease his confidence in his shaykh. Even if a person's confidence in his shaykh will not decrease, he must still not cling to him because the shaykh too has to keep to his own time-table. If you cling to him too much, he will become agitated and it is most harmful to a seeker to agitate his shaykh. It is most essential to be considerate about when you go to your shaykh. Go to him at a time when your coming will not agitate him."

The practice of the spiritual masters of today

A person came to Hadrat Wālā and said: "Give me a taʿwīdh through which my people may appoint me as their chief." However, the man conveyed this in a manner which Hadrat Wālā did not understand. He asked him several times but the man gave an incomplete reply. Hadrat Wālā eventually understood after quite some time. Hadrat Wālā addressed those who were present saying: "If people go to the spiritual masters just once in one or two years, how can their character be rectified?" He added: "It is sad that even the spiritual masters of today have completely given up reprimanding and scolding people over such matters. This is because if you have to rectify others, you will have to make yourself stern and

unsympathetic. Rectification cannot be realized without this. So most of the spiritual masters think to themselves: 'Why should we become bad?'"

A man is reprimanded for sending repeated messages

Hadrat Wālā said: "An old man came to meet me at my meal time. I was at home at the time. He came to the door and sat down outside. Every time he saw a child going in, he would send a message informing me that he is waiting outside. I continued with my work. My wife said to me: 'This man has been sending messages to you from so long. You ought to go see him.' I replied: 'I have to interact with many people from morning to evening. I do not have so much of mercy in me to leave my work merely to go meet him.' When I eventually completed my work close to zuhr time, I went outside. The man said: 'I need to say something.' I replied: 'I will give you a hearing but first tell me why did you worry about your own need and thereby vexed me by sending messages to me repeatedly? Did you not think that others also have their own needs? If you had a need, could it not wait until zuhr time? Would I have not come out to perform zuhr?'

وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوْا حَتّٰى تَخْرُجَ اِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ

Had they remained patient until you went out to them it would have been better for them.[1]

He became very restless when he heard this and said: 'The Maulwīs must not be like this.' I said: 'Janāb! When did I ever make a claim that I am a Maulwī?' He replied: 'I have been to many Maulwīs and no one spoke to me like this.' I said: 'Very well, at least today you learnt that you must never go to anyone and behave in this manner.' He then left angrily."

Do not cross the limits in reverence

Hadrat Wālā said: "Some people come to meet me and when they leave, they walk backwards. This weighs heavily on me. There is no harm in being slightly respectful, it is a natural response. Excessive reverence corrupts the self and pride enters the person. When I left my job and came from Kānpūr, I used to recoil when people here [in Thānah Bhawan] used to

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[1] Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 5.

say *tum* (you) because I had been hearing the words *āp* and *janāb* (terms of respect when addressing a person) for almost fifteen years [while in Kānpūr]. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had even prohibited anyone from standing for him. He would not sit in a distinguished manner in an assembly so much so that newcomers would have to ask:

Who is Muhammad among you?

Consider innate and Shar'ī limits when attending to a person

At the time of fajr, a seeker brought the musjid water-can and a miswāk, and placed them down so that Hadrat Wālā could use them for ablution. Hadrat Wālā said to the mu'adhdhin, ʿUmar Dīn: "Go and find out who placed this miswāk in the water-can and brought it here?" Upon inquiry, it was learnt that such and such person did. Hadrat Wālā said: "Call him here." When he came, he said to him: "When you are not conversant with the etiquette of service why do you do it? Although you may be doing it out of love for me and out of consideration for my comfort, what is the use of a service which causes me discomfort? Only a few students whose hearts are open to me and are aware of my practices are made to carry out all these tasks. As for those who are living here [in the Khānqāh] and are engaged in dhikr and spiritual practices, I feel ashamed to take any service from them. And when it is done against my likes, it causes me discomfort. This is why I prohibit senior people from serving me. This is the innate harm.

The Sharʿī harm is that the musjid water-can is endowed to the musjid, and everyone has an equal right in using an endowed item. When you unnecessarily brought the miswāk before hand and placed it inside, you restricted its use. Now no one can use it, and this is impermissible. People think that they will get close to me by serving me and they want to make me their deity. I am certainly not pleased by these services. Each person must carry out the task for which he came here and take whatever service he wants from me. There is peace for me in this."

Do not place unnecessary burden on others

A person presented an envelope to Hadrat Wālā and said: “This has been sent by such and such person.” Hadrat Wālā looked at it, gave it back to the man and said: “You must return it to him. Why does he not send it himself? What is the need to send it via someone? Why does he place his burden on others?” Hadrat Wālā then addressed the man: “Let me give you some advice. In future, do not convey anyone’s salām or message to me. Did you come here to do your work or are you a messenger for others?”

Consideration to travellers and newcomers

A newcomer was sitting near Hadrat Wālā. He got up from there and went and sat at the back with everyone else. Hadrat Wālā asked: “Why did you go sit there? Come sit here near me.” The man replied: “The place there is quite restricted.” Hadrat Wālā addressed a Maulwī Sāhib: “Why don’t you give your place today? You go to the back and give your place to Khān Sāhib. You are always here, you must be considerate towards newcomers. I am always conscious of this. What can I do all alone? No one listens.” Hadrat Wālā added: “The “dry” ascetics issued a fatwā saying: ‘It is not permissible to give preference to others in gaining proximity to Allāh.’ However, the erudite scholars gave an answer to it: ‘It is also a way of gaining proximity to Allāh by showing consideration to His servants.’ They also said: ‘It is an excellent practice among the residents of Makkah to abstain from performing tawāf during the hajj season out of consideration for the travellers. Although it is not obligatory to do this, it is merely permissible, but it provides a lot of ease to travellers.’”

Miscellaneous Principles

This section contains a few miscellaneous principles and also those which apply to the previous sections but were only recalled now.[1]

Principles related to gifts

Hadrat Wālā has many rules, regulations, conditions and prerequisites with regard to gifts. They are all based on

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[1] Principles related to the previous sections were moved to the appropriate sections. (translator)

wisdom, and Sharʿī and rational necessity; and in accordance with the Sunnah, a sound temperament and correct principles.

Hadrat Wālā never accepts a gift unless:

1. He is fully convinced that the gift is given with full sincerity and honesty.
2. The giver is not under any deception about Hadrat Wālā.
3. The acceptance of the gift will not cause any worldly or Dīnī impediment.
4. Neither he nor the person will be belittled in any way.

Once Hadrat Wālā is convinced that the person will consider all the above before giving the gift, then he does not lay down any rules and regulations on him. In fact, he jokingly says: "If such people were to give their entire houses to me, I will not refuse." There are some of Hadrat Wālā's old statements which I [the compiler] myself had compiled in *Husn al-ʿAzīz*. Hadrat Wālā related certain stories and anecdotes within which the etiquette of gifts, and the principles and prerequisites related to them are mentioned together with the wisdoms and underlying reasons behind them. Some are quoted here. Allāh willing, the reader will learn a lot from them, and I will be saved from repetition.

A villager presents molasses

A farmer who lived in a nearby village, Musāwā, brought some molasses as a gift to Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "There are many inherited lands in Musāwā." The villager said: "This molasses is not from any inherited land." He added: "The inherited lands do not have sugar cane." Hadrat Wālā said: "But all the produce of the land is mixed." The villager said: "No, it is all separate." He then said: "I do not have any inherited farm." Hadrat Wālā said: "But you just said that the inherited lands do not have sugar cane. Now how can I believe that no farm is inherited? Anyway, I am not so pious as to investigate so much. At the same time, I cannot turn a blind eye to such matters."

Hadrat Wālā then addressed all who were present: "Firstly, a doubt has been created in my heart. Secondly, although Musāwā is right next to Thānah Bhawan, the people there are so far away from Dīn as if it is a village which is 1 000 miles

away from ʿulamā'. No one from there ever comes to enquire anything about Dīn. If anyone does come from there, he comes to give milk, brings molasses, rice and so on. And I do not accept anything from them. I find it most disgraceful to accept anything from a man to whom I cannot benefit in any way. Yes, if a person continually derives Dīnī benefit and occasionally gives me a gift out of love, I will not refuse it because he is, after all, known to me and influenced by me. However, I will accept on condition his intention is solely out of love and no other intention. In fact, he must not even have an intention of reward, although, if he gave it because of our bond with Allāh *taʿālā*, he will certainly be rewarded for it. Look! When a person gives something to his father or son, he does not give it with the intention of reward, but he is still rewarded for it. A Hadīth states that if a person places a morsel of food in his wife's mouth he will be rewarded for it. This, despite the fact that no one does it with the intention of reward. If she comes to know that it was given with the intention of reward, she will feel offended and refuse. She will say: "What do you think, I am your means for acquiring reward?"

Hadrat Wālā then said: "The intention of these people [the villager in this case] is the same which they have when they place sheets over the graves of certain shaykhs and martyrs. They think to themselves: 'If these mullās ['ulamā'] get a share, we will experience blessings and our farms will produce a lot of sugar cane.'"

In short, even the intention in giving is corrupt. Hadrat Wālā then said to the villager: "Brother, had you brought something with love, you would have brought it in the proper manner. Now you must continue coming here for two years and ask about Dīnī matters. Do not bring anything as a gift. Do not come here to give me molasses but to take molasses from me (i.e. to learn about matters of Dīn). Once our bond strengthens, there will be no harm in bringing anything. Even then, you must first ask me permission because if I decide that I am not going to accept a certain gift and tell you so before hand, you will not be so offended as you would in the case where I refuse it after you bring it to me. Keep this in mind at all times."

The villager insisted despite these clear and straightforward words of Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā frowned angrily and said: "To what extent can I not be affected by such a response? I am

a human after all. People say that I am very strict. If anyone were to live with me and observe these actions [of people like this villager], I think they will become more strict than me." When Hadrat Wālā refused to accept the gift, the villager said: "Distribute it among the students."

Hadrat Wālā said in an angry tone: "You have shown how you value students. You feel they are deserving of a despicable item which was rejected here. Well, you ought to know that although the students here may be poor, all thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* they are not such as to fall over every fallen and rejected item." The villager said after some time: "So what should I say?"

To sum up, the villager continued saying things which also offended those who were seated nearby. He finally pointed to a certain person and said: "Okay you tell me what to do?" It was eventually learnt that the molasses was actually ʿushr zakāh.[1] This was the final straw. Hadrat Wālā said: "Look! People unnecessarily label me as a very suspicious person. Although I do not remember past incidents, their effects certainly remain in my heart. Now look! Had I accepted it without questioning him and learnt about the true nature of the item later on, how much it would have offended and displeased me!? Furthermore, the man's zakāh too would not have been fulfilled. All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for having placed an aversion from the very beginning, after all, this man left no stone unturned to try and convince me to accept it." Hadrat Wālā then quoted the following couplet:

> Your sword is not destined to kill this weak man. After all, there was no shortcoming whatsoever in your merciless heart.

"Could a person have thought of such possibilities? It is solely through Allāh's guidance that the heart experiences these things."

Hadrat Wālā then said in reference to the villager's misunderstandings: "When a person does not adhere to Dīn, he spoils his worldly matters as well. On the other hand, when a person is religious-minded, he has a sound understanding of worldly matters as well, even though he may not be

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[1] Zakāh on one tenth of the produce of the land.

experienced in them. The same effect is found in lawful sustenance. As for unlawful sustenance, it distorts a person's intelligence."

A person said: "The villager said and did these things because he is a villager and does not have sufficient understanding." Hadrat Wālā replied: "The most this can prove is that it was not his fault. If a person commits an offence due to misunderstanding, then although he did it out of misunderstanding, he has certainly caused harm to someone else. If a person stabs another by mistake, then although he is not a criminal, he has certainly injured the other person. If everyone were to bear the ignorant ways of the ignoramuses, their ignorance will never be rectified because if such an attitude [of forbearance and overlooking] is adopted, they will never learn of their ignorance. They will remain uncultured and uncouth forever. This man will never do this to anyone again. Although, based on certain rules, there was a leeway to accept his gift on behalf of the students, it was necessary for me to refuse it for the sake of his rectification. Had I accepted it, he would have thought to himself: 'I took the item and he accepted it.' He will never think of what is lawful and what is not. But now, he has learnt forever how evil an unlawful item is. He has learnt to be cautious about it in the future. He will never be heedless in this regard. If he intends bringing an item in the future, he will take full precautions before bringing it. In short, he has learnt a sufficient lesson forever. Had his actions been overlooked and stomached, no rectification whatsoever of his would have taken place.

A person brings gifts for the first time after pledging bayʿah a long time ago

It was a Thursday the 1st of Jumādā al-Ūlā 1333 A.H. when a person who had pledged bayʿah a long time ago arrived [in Thānah Bhawan] and presented some cash and clothing as gifts. From the time he pledged bayʿah to his arrival on this day, he never wrote any letter to Hadrat Wālā nor did he enquire any Dīnī matter from him. Hadrat Wālā picked up all the items reproachfully, gave it back to the man and said to him in a sharp tone: "Did you make me your shaykh solely to

continue covering me with sheets.[1] You have humiliated me severely. You thought that I will melt just by looking at rupees and fabrics. You think I am a businessman [who is running this entire programme for monetary gain]. Although I am not a pious person, all thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that I am not a materialist. Although I live on this, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* it is not my way of earning. I find it most disgraceful to accept anything from a person who has not derived any Dīni benefit from me. It gives the impression that I accepted your bayʿah solely for this. People have destroyed Sufism in this way."

"All this corruption has been introduced by the descendents of the shaykhs. They [the descendents] fabricated this ruling that if you go empty handed [to a shaykh] you will return empty handed. They feel you cannot acquire any spiritual benefit if you do not give them anything. They say that if you have nothing to give a shaykh, you should at least present clods of earth for istinjā'. This is the essence of Sufism which they embedded in the minds of the masses. Whatever you have brought at present is in fulfilment of this same custom. You feel you cannot come before me empty handed. I ask you, why has this fervour of love sprung forth only today? If you could not send any letter in the past, you could have sent a gift because many things can be sent via the post. If you could not do that, you could have at least sent a few cents by post. Allāh forbid! I do not mean that you must now start sending these items by post because – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – I also know how to send them back. Had you sent anything by post, I would have most definitely sent it back. However, in such a case the complain that your love gushed forth only when you saw my face would not have been valid."

The man took an oath saying that it was solely love which prompted him. Hadrat Wālā said: "Enough! Do not take oaths because it shows disrespect to Allāh's name and I will keep quiet when I hear His name. Thereafter, no matter how useless your explanation may be, I will not be able to say anything about it. However, let me assure you that I will accept it even without an oath if you can give me an intelligent answer to my

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[1] Reference is made to the innovation of covering graves with sheets. This practice is done with the intention of pleasing the deceased in the grave.

question and which will convince these four people who are here. Even if I am not convinced by your answer, I promise you that if these four people accept your answer, I will follow them and accept it as well. My question is: 'If you have given this gift solely out of love, what is the reason for not having this love before?"

The man had said previously: "I will act on whatever instruction Hadrat Wālā issues."

Hadrat Wālā said: "Did you ever ask a doctor to prescribe a *munaddij*[1] and continued consuming it for the rest of your life and never considered the need to ask him for a laxative? If you decided that you are going to adhere to just one teaching of mine, what was the need to pledge bay'ah? Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's book, *Irshād Murshid*, is available. My books are also available. You should have studied them and started acting on their teachings. I am also surprised at the fact that during this long period you did not even find the need to inquire about a ruling!? What is the benefit of being such a murīd?"

"This is why I have generally stopped accepting bay'ah. Despite my strictness in this regard, if I accepted a person as a murīd, he must realize that I only accepted after he must have really persisted. Yet this is your attitude?"

When the man was about to depart on the third day, he asked for pardon. Hadrat Wālā replied: "You did not do anything for which you have to ask pardon. However, you will have to make up for the reason for which I did not accept your gift. You will now have to continue corresponding with me. If you are not satisfied, then let me tell you that I have pardoned you." Hadrat Wālā added: "You yourself think with an open mind and tell me if my complaint is valid or not. Not corresponding with me is proof that you are not doing what you are supposed to be doing because when a person does what he has to do, he definitely experiences occasions when he has to ask questions and enquire."

The man then requested that Hadrat Wālā should at least accept the clothing which he brought as a gift. He said: "I had these clothes sewn especially for you solely out of my love for

[1] A suppurative medicine – one which causes the discharge of pus from a wound or sore.

you.” Hadrat Wālā said: “You do have love but it is accompanied by foolishness. One should not make foolish statements. For you to insist despite my refusal means that you want to give me your opinion. Must I follow your opinion or do you have to follow my opinion? It seems like you want to be the shaykh. You must realize that there is wisdom in my refusal as it entails fulfilling the right of one’s shaykh. If you think that I refused out of wickedness, then you have not fulfilled the right of your shaykh. It is as if you are asking me to make up for a lost opportunity. But now you have learnt a lesson for the rest of your life because the rule is that a practical warning is never forgotten. A verbal warning is sometimes remembered and sometimes forgotten. How can I pour water over all these advantages by accepting your gift after your second request? How can I allow myself to be materialistic [by accepting your gift] and destroy the Dīn of others in the process? You yourself can understand that I could not have refused without a valid reason when my livelihood is on this. I neither have any business nor any farm. This is my income. Is there any person in this world who dislikes something which comes to him [for free]? If a person dislikes his sustenance coming to him, it will be a serious evil on his part.”

Despite this lengthy explanation of Hadrat Wālā, the man said: “I had a pair of sandals made for you. [Accept them as a gift].” Hadrat Wālā replied: “This is similar to someone trying to convince a child to eat. You tell a child to eat some sweetmeat. If it does not eat, you say it must have some rice. If it refuses, you say, okay at least have some milk. Do you think I am a child? It seems you are making a joke of me. You should at least use your intelligence a bit. Anyway, you must correspond with me. Once my heart opens towards you and I see that you are occupied in the task of rectification, there will be no harm in presenting a gift. However, if you ever feel like sending anything, you must first ask me. I promise you that if it is not against my practice, rules and temperament, I will permit you. Do not think that I will refuse forever. Yes, if a gift is against my norm, I will refuse.”

The man had brought several items. He had brought a considerable amount of molasses as well. The molasses melted because they had remained outside for quite some time. The man said that it would be difficult for him to take it back.

Hadrat Wālā said: “If you feel like it, you may distribute it among the students.” The man accepted happily.

After the man left, Hadrat Wālā said: “I find it very burdensome when a person brings several items as gifts. For example, if he gives me ten rupees at once, I do not find it burdensome. But if he gives me several items to the value of ten rupees, each item has a ‘weight’ of its own. I have a lot of doubts about such matters. When several items are presented, it means I must appreciate this item, that item, the third item and so on.” He added: “Cash money is the best gift because a person can obtain whatever he needs. When I returned from hajj, a person – out of love – wanted to buy sweetmeats for one rupee and invite me. I said: ‘What will I do with so much of sweetmeats? If you really want to make me happy, give me the one rupee instead.’”

“The man happily gave me the one rupee. I used it for my expenses. What would I have done with sweetmeats? A person wrote a letter to me seeking permission to send me a pair of shoes as a gift. I wrote back and informed him that I have several pairs of shoes. He wrote again: ‘Tell me whatever you would like to have and I will send it to you.’ I replied: ‘I have to do a lot of mental work. You may buy almonds and send them to me.’ He sent me almonds which I ate. Informality of this nature is very good. However, informality of this type only comes after a lot of interaction or after a lot of correspondence.”

“On the other hand, this man had not really opened up to me and he had brought a lot of molasses. I am very suspicious in such matters because I have vast experience in this regard. A person who gives large amounts [as gifts] feels that he has fulfilled his rights and there is no need for him to do good deeds. When a person gives large amounts, he has to pay a lot of attention and go into a lot of formalities. What is the need to empty one’s entire house?” Hadrat Wālā then smiled and said: “Giving small amounts at a time is also beneficial to a shaykh in his worldly matters. Small amounts which are collected over a period of time amount to a large sum. If people were to give large amounts, those who have very little will not even have the courage to give anything. This is most harmful.”

The benefits of strictness, limits and regulations

Hadrat Wālā said in reference to the above person whose gift was refused: "Look! He was the one who came forward and presented the gift on his own accord. Truly speaking, I really feel scared that Allāh *taʿālā* might say to me: 'O you unworthy fellow! We are sending to you and you are refusing?' I am very fearful of this. May Allāh *taʿālā* pardon me.'"

Hadrat Wālā then said: "Even if there was overwhelming love in his gift, there was certainly an adulteration in his intention. He thought to himself: 'I will be eating there, so it will be very embarrassing if I do not give anything.' This is why I stopped the practice of feeding. I offer just one meal, and that too, where I feel it is prudent. I then tell the people to make their own arrangements so that they do not even have such thoughts [of having to give something because they are eating in the Khānqāh]. Yes, there are certain exceptions in this regard."

Hadrat Wālā continues: "The one who has accompanied him has come to become a murīd. However, he will not have the courage to make such a request now because he must be thinking that I am very strict. Even if anyone does not become my murīd, the definite benefit of this is that he will at least learn that it is no ordinary matter to become a murīd. If he goes to any other place, he will certainly keep in mind that there are certain prerequisites for bayʿah. And if he does not have even this much of understanding, those who were present will certainly learn the reality of the path. I want to show to people what the real path is all about. A person has to just bear my strictness and he will see how I will be his servant for the rest of his life."

I [the compiler] said: "Such a detailed teaching of character was probably not taught for a very long time." Hadrat Wālā replied: "Yes. I always say that the 'ulamā' teach the prescribed books [in the Dār al-'Ulūm] while the Miyājī [a primary teacher] teaches *alif, bā, tā* (the basic alphabets). So the responsibility of teaching *alif, bā, tā* has fallen on my shoulders."

Someone said: "May Allāh *taʿālā* enable this system of yours to proliferate fully." Hadrat Wālā replied: "It seems difficult because if such importance to this system was given in a few more places, there would have been hope. But some other

personalities are against such strictness. They say that if so much of strictness were to be adopted, no one will come. However, each one has his own opinion. I feel that if a strict system is adopted everywhere, people will come in large numbers because where else can they go? I do not pay so much of attention to dhikr and other spiritual exercises as much as I do to character. I do this because character is related to others."

A Maulānā S̱āẖib gives his opinion on a suspicious gift

While speaking about a gift which causes one to become suspicious, a certain Maulānā S̱āẖib said: "What if a gift is accepted in such a situation and then compensated for later on?" H̱aḏrat Wālā replied: "If we were to do this, how will we be able to remember the various gifts? This is more so when my temperament is a very hasty and demanding one. If I have even one cent of a person, my self demands on me to get rid off it as quickly as possible. On one occasion I had taken one rupee from my wife. It occurred to me in the middle of the night that I have to pay it back. I became restless, got up and checked whether she was asleep. She also sleeps very little. She asked: 'What is the matter?' I said: 'Take this one rupee of yours.' She said: 'Glory to Allāh! What is the hurry?' I replied: 'Take it away from me or else I will not get sleep for the rest of the night.' I only fell asleep after I returned her money. Such is my nature. Similarly, when any subject matter comes to my mind at night, I light the lamp immediately, note it down and keep it by my head-side. Only then am I satisfied. It is because of this very same demanding and hasty nature that I sometimes make this supplication to Allāh *ta'ālā*: 'O Allāh! Pardon me without punishing me at all. If not, how will I be able to exercise patience in the punishment? I will be just waiting for Your forgiveness.'"

Caution in giving and receiving

H̱aḏrat Wālā said: "The 'ulamā' have to be extremely cautious in giving and receiving moneys. A person who was of our line of thinking wrote a letter of complaint saying: 'You should not be too strict as regards gifts. You must accept them and spend them on your guests.' A certain Maulwī S̱āẖib said it very well when he said: 'A person who gives such an advice is a fool.' In other words, who unnecessarily takes on two responsibilities, one of receiving and the other of spending.' The man who wrote

this letter did it as a criticism because he was not hosted." Hadrat Wālā then said: "I have certain conditions before accepting gifts. One of them is that the person must have interacted with me for a considerable period of time so that our hearts are fully opened towards each other and informality between us is established. Another condition is that a gift must not be more valuable than his one day's income. For example, if he is earning 15 rupees a month, he must not give a gift which is worth more than half a rupee at once. Thirdly, there must be at least one month's gap between two gifts. Fourthly, he must not make it a strict practice to give specifically at a certain time."

"In the same way, I do not spend unnecessarily. Instead, I store an amount which would suffice for almost a year. I am also not bound to the norms when it comes to treating guests. I will treat each one according to my relationship with him. I call some people to my house and feed them there. To others I send money and tell them to go to the shops and buy food for themselves. To yet others, I give nothing at all. Since my conditions are strict, the income will obviously be less. If I am going to spend freely, my intention will become adulterated and I will not be able to stick to my conditions. A shaykh came to me and complained about falling to debt for 6 000 rupees because of his public kitchen [from which guests and murīds were fed]. He wanted me to intercede on his behalf to a Ra'īs to give him a loan. I asked him: 'Why did you get into this unnecessary debt?' He replied: 'I thought that those who come and have meals at my place will give something in return. But no one gave anything.' I asked: 'How will you pay back the loan which you want now?' He replied: 'My murīds will give me.' I thought to myself in my mind: 'He still expects to get something from his murīds!?' So you see, this is what happens when one spends too much. These are the harms of getting into debts. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, a year's expenses always remain with me and I am at peace about it. The Hadīth also states that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to give his wives the full year's expenses to them at once. Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* writes that to store a year's expenses does not negate reliance on Allāh *ta'ālā*. Now I do not hesitate in refusing the biggest of gifts when they are not in line with my conditions. I return gifts which do not fulfil my conditions without any fear or hesitation. I do not even experience any

whisperings about them because I know I already have a year's supply. This brings immense peace."

On one occasion, I [the compiler] saw many guests so I presented a gift to Hadrat Wālā. He replied: "This is an excess (because the gap between my previous gift and the present one was small). However, he accepted it when I insisted. Later on, he returned it via a close relative with the following message: "I felt ashamed to return it at that time because I was worried about your happiness." He added: "Do not consider it to be a return. Instead, Allāh willing, we will see what happens on some other occasion." Later on Hadrat Wālā spoke to me directly and said: "You had given it to me because of the many guests. However, all thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that nowadays I have more than enough. Just as a person is pleased at receiving money, I have now realized that I experience as much joy in spending them [on my guests]."

A stranger's gift is not accepted

A judge had received spiritual training from Hadrat Wālā via correspondence but never got a chance to come and visit him. He sent fifteen rupees to me to convey them on his behalf to Hadrat Wālā as a gift. Hadrat Wālā said: "Since I never met him, I do not know his temperament and disposition. His faith in me developed merely by studying my books. Books are advertisements, and we cannot rely on faith which is based on advertisements. Yes, had he lived with me and observed my actions, and then developed faith in me, it would have been another matter. I feel ashamed to accept a gift from a stranger with whom I am not totally informal. It is possible that he may have a very high opinion of me and after meeting me I do not fill up to his expectations. He will then regret having sent the gift to me."

"A person had asked me a ruling and my reply was contrary to his temperament. He said: 'I served and attended to him for so long, yet he did not help me when I needed him.'" Hadrat Wālā said: "It is because of these reasons that I hesitate from accepting gifts from people like the judge. If he asks, you must write to him and say: 'It is against Hadrat Wālā's practice, he is therefore refusing.' However, you must also add: 'He never refuses any person's gift out of scorn for the person. He values every Muslim, especially the one who is a seeker – he really

values such a person. Please do not feel offended. I will accept it after we get to know each other better.'"

My [the compiler's] request for a meal

My family intended inviting Hadrat Wālā together with a few associates, family members and guests to a meal. Hadrat Wālā stopped us from making such a request and said to me: "Do not live here [in Thānah Bhawan] as a local resident but as a traveller. Cut out invitations completely. Do not invite me to any meal nor anyone else. Even if you can save a single cent, you must do it." (I came to Thānah Bhawan after taking a lengthy unpaid leave and I intend extending it). I said: "I should at least be permitted to invite Hadrat Wālā alone." He replied: "You should not have sought permission in this sitting because there is a different type of imposition at present. If your heart desired, you could have asked me on some other occasion. And if you want to invite me alone, there is no need to give me notice from before hand or to make any special arrangements. You could have done this: If you have prepared something special at home and you feel like feeding it to me out of love, you could place it in a container and send it to me. You could even place two rotīs on top of the container and send them with. There is no need for any special formalities. What is the need to extend a formal invitation and then to make special arrangements to prepare a new dish? I must also add that when you sent some food on such and such date, it was a bit too much. I am living with just my wife, the rest of the people are part of the extended family. You can leave them out whenever you like. If you have to send anything, send only that much which will suffice the two of us while also considering the food which we ourselves have already prepared. In other words, the food which you send must be enough for just one person. If we wish, we will eat all by ourselves, or distribute a little to each of the other family people. You must not send more than what will suffice one person."

Invitation to a meal in Lauhārī

Hadrat Wālā then said: "A friend in Lauhārī invited me to a meal. He took me after a lot of persistence on his side. I thought I will be the only one, I will go and join in the meal. On reaching there I realized that it was an invitation for 50-60 people. This weighed heavily on me but I kept quiet. When I was leaving after the meal, he presented a set of clothes and

ten rupees to me. I asked him: "What are these clothes for?" He replied: "They were made for you on the occasion of the wedding." I asked: "Am I a barber that I must take a set of clothing on the occasion of a wedding?" I also said to him with regard to the money: "I will never accept it. You wasted so much money on the meal, and I felt very bad about eating it. Had I known from before hand, I would not have accepted your invitation."

Hadrat Nānautwī's style of invitation

Hadrat Wālā continued: "The style of invitation of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *rahimahullāh* really appeals to me. A student invited him. Hadrat Maulānā said: "I will accept on condition it is only the food which you normally receive from the house of that person (the student used to receive his food from a certain person)." The student was bent on inviting Hadrat Maulānā so he was forced to accept this condition. He eventually presented Hadrat Maulānā with exactly the same food which he received. The Maulānā ate it. Hadrat Wālā said: "This approach benefits others as well in the sense that the student was saved from expenses and the fuss of making extra arrangements. It also benefited the student in the sense that since he [Hadrat Nānautwī] was a "cheap shaykh", he will be able to invite many people. Had he been an "expensive shaykh", he would only invite him after having made arrangements for a large number of people. In such a case, it will take several years before he can extend an invitation. On the other hand, if he is a "cheap shaykh", there will be no difficulty at all in inviting him. He will be invited to many places almost every day. The whole year will pass in invitations. I say: The way which is in line with the Sunnah contains nothing but benefit. This way is in total accordance with the Sunnah."

The Sahābah's informal temperament

A Sahābī invited Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.* On the way, a person began conversing with him and continued walking along with him. When he reached the host's house, he stopped immediately and said to the host: "Brother, one additional person has joined me. If you permit, he will join us. If not, he will go back." The host permitted him happily. Nowadays, people use this incident wrongly. I explain it as follows. It requires special attention. What people do nowadays

is they summon two or three people, take them along, and in order to protect their "piety", they say to the host: "Brother, I have two or three people with me." They cling to this Hadīth whereas it is totally different. They may have seen Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asking the host, but they did not see how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* developed the temperament and disposition of his Sahābah first. These [pseudo claimants to piety] have not even developed such a temperament. What was the temperament of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*? It was a free, casual and unceremonious temperament.

A Sahābī extends an invitation

I now relate an incident to portray the extent of the casual and free temperament which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had developed in his Companions. It is a great example which is virtually non-existent today. It is related in *Muslim Sharīf* that there was a Persian who used to prepare an excellent gravy. He came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* one day and said: "I have prepared an excellent gravy today. Come and join me." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "I will come on condition ʿĀ'ishah also joins us." He replied: "No, ʿĀ'ishah cannot come." Just ponder. We are talking about Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*, the most beloved of his wives. Yet the man refuses with absolute freedom. Who developed and created this temperament in him? It was none other than Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It was based on this very temperament that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had asked his host on behalf of his companion. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* knew fully well that if the man wanted, he would permit him; if not, he would refuse without any hesitation. Where do we find such qualities today? How can we make such a request to a person who is overwhelmed by us and regarding whom we are not sure that if he does not want, he will refuse freely? Even if such a person does give permission, it is definitely not considered according to the Sharīʿah and practising on it is not permissible."

Anyway, the Sahābī says that Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* cannot join them. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "If she cannot come, I too will not come." A person has a right to lay down a condition when extending an

invitation, and the person who is invited also has a right to accept the condition or reject it. In short, both have rights. The Sahābī was so free that when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said no, she will have to join, he did not accept. He continued on his way but came back after going some way. He was brimming with love. He said: "O Rasūlullāh! I have prepared an excellent gravy. You may come and join me." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "I will come on condition ʿĀ'ishah also joins us." He replied: "No. ʿĀ'ishah cannot come." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "If she cannot come, I too will not come." The Sahābī went away again. He returned a third time and made the same offer. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* gave him the same reply. The Sahābī said: "Very well, if that is your wish, you may bring her along."

When explaining this Hadīth, our Hadrat Maulānā said to us: I have my opinion in this regard: The gravy was probably little and the Sahābī wanted Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to eat to his fill. If Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* were to join in, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* would not be able to eat to his fill. Once he gauged that it was really his wish for ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* to join, he agreed eventually. He thought to himself: "My desire is for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to eat to his fill but if he wants to stay slightly hungry [by sharing it with ʿĀ'ishah], so let it be." The order to observe purdah/hijāb had not been revealed as yet. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* walked in front while Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* followed him. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had developed this temperament in the person before he could ask.

Any Maulānā Sāhib or Shāh Sāhib who wants to adhere to this Hadīth must first develop this temperament. Without developing it, it is unlawful to seek permission from a host [to bring more people with him]. Even if the host permits, it is unlawful to take any additional people.

The condition of people today

Nowadays people are very careless and indiscriminate in this regard. If a person is invited to a meal, he will take a few others with him. If anyone objects, he responds by saying that he obtained permission from the host. When a host gives a person money to cover the expenses for the journey to where he is

invited and some of the money is left over, then in most cases the person does not even make mention of it. Whereas it was his duty to return it. If not, it is an act of treachery because he is not made owner of it. Rather, it is given to him as a trust to cover his expenses. Even if anyone is particular in this regard, the most he will do is inform the host that this is what the journey cost and this is the amount which is left over. "I will now do as you say." The obvious reply will be for the person to keep the change. This is a serious tribulation. Why did he not return it in the first place? All this evil is as a result of love for the world. Love for wealth has penetrated the veins, and so, the slightest excuse is needed to obtain permissibility. Previously, the fatwā was that things are essentially permissible until their impermissibility is proven. Now the situation is such that we have to say that things are essentially impermissible until their permissibility is proven. This is the fatwā which ought to be issued. Only then will people abstain from the unlawful. Everything is going upside down.

When it comes to gifts, I go to the extent of thinking if the gift was given out of excessive zealous love. Generally, a lack of sincerity is an obstacle to accepting a gift. However, according to me, excessive sincerity is from among the obstacles to accepting a gift because I think that the person does not think anything about giving the gift when he is overtaken by zealous love. Once his zeal settles and calms down, he will become conscious of his budget and think to himself that he gave ten rupees away to the shaykh. This is why when I know that a person is able to give five rupees, I accept only two and half from him. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, despite doing this, I receive a lot. When something is decreed for a person, it is impossible for it to go anywhere else. Our conviction in Allāh *taʿālā* has become spoilt. We think that if we were to return a gift, we will not get it from anywhere else. I say that you will still receive what was decreed for you. And if you do not receive it, it was never decreed for you.

Preference to preservation of Dīn

Hadrat Wālā then said: "The preservation of Dīn cannot be realized without this. Whatever attention people pay to us is because of Dīn. It is therefore most essential for us to maintain the honour of Dīn. If honour of Dīn is not maintained, who will ever bother about us? There was a Khān Sāhib in the village of

Garhī. He was a very old man who used to show a lot of affection to me. Whenever he presented anything to me, I accepted it happily. I used to consider him as a father and feel that whatever he gives me is like my father giving me something. After he passed away, his sons wanted to treat me in the same manner. I refused flatly saying: "I cannot accept anything now because you are like equal brothers to me. I will only accept something from you when I myself give you something." By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, they were very understanding and cultured. They said: "Very well. Just accept it on this one occasion and we promise you we will never give you anything for the rest of our lives." I accepted it. They never gave me anything again. However, what they do is that they occasionally cook fish and send some to me, or send the meat of an animal which they hunted. There is nothing too serious about this, but Allāh *taʿālā* knows that I feel ashamed. The fact of the matter is that since the Khān Sāhib was my father's friend, I considered myself to be like his son, and his sons to be my brothers. Had the relationship between us been one of bayʿah, it would have been another matter. Their relationship with me is solely because of my father. This is why they are like my brothers and their position is different."

Hadrat Wālā added: "Has my income been reduced because of this? I have experienced that on the day I returned a gift, Allāh *taʿālā* ensured that I received one or two more gifts from somewhere or the other. When I return a gift – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I have full confidence that I will certainly receive something else. It therefore becomes easy to return it."

Strict rules are for Dīnī benefit

Hadrat Wālā said: "These points may appear very strict at present. However, when people start seeing their benefits after some time, they will value all this. Many have already seen their benefits. I have already informed my associates that when they come here, they must not stick to giving me anything. If not, people will not get the inspiration to meet me for weeks and even years because now they will think that they will only go after having made arrangements to present me with a gift. My present attitude [of laying down strict conditions before accepting gifts] has made it very easy for people to come here whenever they wish. They are free to come even if they do not present me with a gift in their entire lives. People have made it

very difficult for themselves when it comes to eating and feeding. A person who had been a guest at a particular place will count the number of days he spent and estimate how much food he must have eaten. He will then add half a rupee to the total and think to himself that he has to give that amount of money before leaving. This is a despicable situation. I did not even initiate such a system. Apart from a few special people, I do not consider it necessary to feed anyone. In this way, I am at ease and so is the person. What is the need for calculations as if we are partners? Despite this, people still give me something or the other. I feel ashamed to accept, but I do because it is given out of sincerity. In short, may Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with sincerity. Where there is sincerity, the money will come automatically. All that is needed is sincerity."

Adherence to the Sunnah in laying down rules and regulations

Someone said to Hadrat Wālā: "My heart desires to pen down Hadrat Wālā's complete programme so that it is preserved and it will be of real benefit for later generations as well." Hadrat Wālā replied: "This is not my programme, it is the programme of Dīn. I did not invent it. All praise is due to Allāh, I am very conscious about ensuring that the entire programme must not be against the Sunnah and the Sharīʿah. This is a great mercy from Allāh *taʿālā*. There was a certain point which I had in my mind and which I felt was probably against the Sunnah: If a person gave a large amount of money as a gift, although it is not beyond the person's means and there is no defect in his sincerity, I felt it too large an amount and felt it burdensome on me. My heart felt that I should decline it. At the same time, I used to ask myself: What Sharʿī reason is there in declining it? Although I could not fathom any Sharʿī reason [to refuse], I used to decline the amount because it is also difficult to act against one's natural disposition. However, I knew that it was solely a natural excuse having no basis in the Sunnah. I remained in doubt about this for a long time. I considered my self to have failed when I declined to accept such an amount, but I would still decline it. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, my doubt was eventually removed when I came across a Hadīth wherein Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* says that if a person offers perfume, do not refuse it because it is not burdensome and it is an item of delight. The reason for not declining is that it is not burdensome. When I read this Hadīth, I said to myself: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, it has been

established from this Hadīth that finding something naturally burdensome is considered to be a valid and legal reason for refusing a gift. As a precaution, I asked other scholars if this point is really learnt from this Hadīth or not. I did this because I thought that it must not be that my self prompted me to extract this meaning. They agreed with me and said that the Hadīth clearly establishes this point."

A monthly gift from my brother

Hadrat Wālā added: "My brother wanted to set aside a monthly amount for me. He is an intelligent man and wrote to me without any formalities. I wrote back to him: There is a disadvantage in this, viz. at present, I do not rely on any specific person, I rely solely on Allāh *taʿālā*. Even if I do rely on the creation, it is not on any specific creation. If you are going to set aside a monthly amount for me [and send it to me], my eyes will be focussed on Bareilly [Hadrat Wālā's brother was working in Bareilly]. I will start counting the days and think to myself whether March has ended or not, has May ended or not. When it is the first of the month, I will think to myself that you must have received your salary by now, and the rupees are probably on their way to me and will reach me by today. If they do not arrive, I will get worried and think about reasons for the delay. All these conflicts will take place here. At present Allāh *taʿālā* is providing me from places I cannot even imagine. This feeling will no longer be experienced."

"The second point which I wrote is this: 'You must not feel offended by what I am saying. Although your salary is 450 rupees, the needs of a person change. Sometimes, your expenses may be more than 500 rupees. At such a time you will feel burdened because obviously the fervour of love does not remain all the time.' He is a very intelligent man. He wrote back: 'I am most astonished at the fact that I could not realize such an obvious point at the time when I first wrote to you. My eyes opened after I read your letter. Every word of your letter ought to be written in gold. I retract my opinion.' Later on he wrote: 'Others also present gifts to you. Why should I be deprived of this service if my heart desires it?'"

"I wrote back: 'Do others specify as you want to? If you present to me anything without specifying it, I promise you I will accept it.' Subsequently, when I used to go to Bareilly, he would sometimes buy my ticket, give me 20 or 25 rupees, have some

clothes sewn for me, and sometimes he would not give me anything. In most cases, he would not give me anything. He understood my temperament and practised accordingly. This is what love demands. Sometimes I used to intentionally give him a guinea for safekeeping so that he may be convinced that his brother has sufficient."

A good word of advice from the family

Hadrat Wālā said: "My wife made this one point which really appealed to me. She said: 'When you are on a journey, you must have a good appearance. You must wear good clothes, you must wear a new pair of shoes and also carry an extra pair.' I said to her: 'I do not have to show off before anyone.' She replied: 'Actions are judged by intentions. I feel that if people were to see you in a poor condition, they would think that you are experiencing poverty and they ought to give you something. But if they see you wearing good clothes and new shoes, they will think you do not need anything and will not worry about you. If a journey is undertaken while having a good appearance with the intention of not causing Muslims to worry about you then it is an act of worship.' Look at what a fine point she made! When people see me, they will be happy to see that I am living in comfort and will not worry about me. Consequently, when I embark on a journey, I select a few sets of clothing which are in a good condition."

Hadrat Wālā added: "All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* this woman of Allāh does not have any greed whatsoever in her. If not, it would have been difficult to maintain her. If I ever forget my conditions in accepting a gift, she reprimands me and says: 'This is against your practice. Why did you accept it?' She never interceded to accept any gift but certainly reprimanded me on several occasions for accepting." Hadrat Wālā then said: "I am relating all these points to you so that if any of them appeal to you, you may emulate them. A practical instruction is far more effective than an academic instruction. When a person hears stories and incidents, he realizes that such things are certainly happening."

The impressions of a lawyer

"A certain lawyer had come here. He is a very good and religious man. He studied in Aligarh University and was a master there. He holds a B.A. LLB. Degree. He is from the

progeny of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Haqq Dehlawī *rahimahullāh*. I should not be relating this but even if I do it will not prove any perfection because I am nothing. He said to me: 'There were two things which were lost up to now and were not expressed. I could not even find them in books. One is the principles of Sufism. No one was speaking about them. *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*[1] made this very clear. The second point was discussions on social relationships and dealings. No importance is given to these subjects because people will say to the person who speaks about them: 'What are you doing about it?' All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that this aspect of Dīn which was concealed has now come into the open.'"

Hadrat Wālā's principles are sensible and appropriate

I [the compiler] say: From the above-quoted statements the reader must have clearly gauged Hadrat Wālā's extreme caution in accepting gifts and his high level of independence which stemmed from servitude to Allāh *taʿālā*. Furthermore, all his principles are sensible and supported by proofs.

There are many other incidents related to gifts. I am recalling them as I am narrating the above incidents. However, time and space do not permit me to relate all. I will relate a few short incidents in this regard.

The story of an army man

A person who was most probably employed in the army presented some cash and non-cash items as gifts. The man was a total stranger so Hadrat Wālā – as was his practice – declined in a kind manner by saying: "It is against my practice to accept a gift from someone whom I do not know and with whom there is no informality." The man insisted so Hadrat Wālā explained to him nicely saying: "One should not insist on another to go against his norm." The man still insisted. Hadrat Wālā initially speaks to such people in a kind and affectionate manner. But when the other person starts to offend him, he expresses his own offence in a sharp tone. He says in this regard: "If people only pay heed when I scold them, what must I do? They give me no alternative." Anyway, when the man did not desist from his insistence, Hadrat Wālā said to him: "Look!

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[1] A book which contains letters from seekers who wrote to Hadrat Wālā and his replies to them. (translator)

I am now becoming angry. Take away your things immediately.” However, as will be learnt further on, the man had come here with the express intention of forcing Hadrat Wālā to accept his gifts. He therefore did not desist. Hadrat Wālā then became extremely angry and scolded him saying: “Take your things and get away from here.” The man picked up his items hastily and proceeded to the musjid.

The man then related his story to me later that day or the next day. He was a simple and ordinary army man. He said: “How will I leave this place and go back? The fact is that when I was leaving, I was having a discussion about these gifts to one of Maulānā’s [referring to Hadrat Wālā] murīds. The murīd said to me that Maulānā will never accept my gifts. I said to him: ‘Is there such a thing as a person not accepting a gift!? I will certainly give him something and come back.’ The murīd said to me: ‘If you go there and insist, then remember you will regret it.’ What he said proved to be true. I thought to myself that once he [Hadrat Wālā] sees the money and other items, it will be impossible for him to refuse. After all, I never saw a shaykh refusing a gift.”

Now you see! This was the reason for the man’s insistence. How could Hadrat Wālā’s pure heart accept such a gift?

A Ra’īs presents a gift

A Ra’īs who also held a very high position presented 25 rupees. Hadrat Wālā accepted only ten rupees and returned the remaining fifteen saying: “This amount is enough.” The Ra’īs departed but his companion remained behind. He expressed his astonishment and asked Hadrat Wālā: “How did you ascertain his intention? Did you receive some inspiration, because his original intention was to give you just ten rupees, but he had said to me: ‘I feel ashamed to give just ten rupees.’ He therefore added fifteen rupees and presented 25 to you. He felt it against his rank to offer just ten rupees.” Hadrat Wālā replied: “No, I did not receive any divine inspiration. Allāh *taʿālā* steers me. There was a specific reason for accepting ten rupees. My family bought ten rupees worth of firewood at once because it was of a good quality. However, we did not have that amount at the time so it was bought on credit. I feel very burdened by debts so I prayed to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable me to pay off my debt. When the man presented 25 rupees, I thought to myself that I will not accept them. But then I feared that I

had prayed to Allāh *taʿālā* and if I refuse, it might amount to ingratitude. Allāh *taʿālā* might say to me: 'You had asked for it but when I convey it to you, you put on airs and you refuse.' This is why I took ten rupees from him – the amount for which I had prayed to Allāh *taʿālā* – and returned the remainder."

An amusing incident

Hadrat Wālā relates an amusing incident with regard to gifts. He relates: "A man arrived, and in order to get to know him, I began asking him questions about his journey and the purpose of coming here. But he did not answer any of my questions. This started to annoy me. When his companion noticed this, he said: 'He has so much of love for you that he cannot mention your name even in your absence. He has been writing to you since quite some time.' My displeasure was diffused when I heard this and I excused him. Then after the zuhr salāh he gave me a gift of ten rupees which I accepted because of his previous contact with me. However, no sooner I accepted the money, his mouth opened, and opened to such an extent that he began asking many useless questions. This began to irk me. I thought to myself: 'What is the reason for this? Previously he could not answer my essential questions, and now his mouth has opened so much that he himself is asking questions, and that too, useless questions which are annoying me.' I immediately realized that the rupees caused his mouth to open. Once he gave me the money, he assumed that he was now excluded from all my rules and regulations, and he has the right to ask me whatever he likes without any reservation. I said to him: 'I am not going to answer your questions at present, wait a bit. Let me first return your ten rupees which opened your mouth. After that I will answer those of your questions which I feel need to be answered.' I took out the money and gave it back to him. I then said: 'Very well, I am free and so are you. You may now ask me whatever you wish.' He fell silent once the money went back to him and did not have the courage to ask a single question. I was pleased over the fact that my diagnosis was correct."

An incident with a local resident

Hadrat Wālā also relates the following incident: "There was a man who used to send food to my house periodically. He was having a court case with another person and asked me a ruling in this regard. I wrote an answer according to the rules of

jurisprudence. Incidentally, the answer was against him and in favour of his adversary. He went and complained to others saying: 'Look! I have always been attending to him but now when the need arose, he writes a fatwā against me.' I was most disturbed when I heard about it. I sent a message to him saying: 'If you gave me food and drink occasionally, you certainly ate and drank at my place because there is always a mutual giving and receiving among local residents. Nonetheless, if I am able to estimate whatever you gave me, I am prepared to give you its equivalent in cash.'"

An incident related to an uncouth person

Hadrat Wālā relates the following incident: "Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was my guest on one occasion. Another person was also a guest. When this person finished his meal, he took out one rupee from his pocket and threw it at me. The Maulānā was most displeased and wanted to say something to the man. I respectfully stopped the Maulānā and said: "I will say whatever needs to be said. There is no need for you to take any pain.' I then scolded him severely, expressed my displeasure, returned his rupee to him and said: 'What do you think, I am a cook [who has to be paid]?'"

After relating such incidents, Hadrat Wālā says: "In the beginning I was not so strict about accepting gifts. But when I experienced incidents of this nature, I began taking many precautions."

Maulānā Manfaʿat ʿAlī

Janāb Maulwī Manfaʿat ʿAlī Sāhib (B.A. LLB), a lawyer in Sahāranpūr, related to me that whenever he wished to give a gift to Hadrat Wālā when he was still a student, Hadrat Wālā would decline the gift and say: "You are still a student. At present you have a right over me." Hadrat Wālā added: "If I were to start accepting gifts from everyone, I will be able to construct walls of gold." This was really true. Had Hadrat Wālā accepted gifts openly, he would have an income amounting to hundreds of thousands because Allāh *taʿālā* placed a magnetic attraction in him and conferred him with the quality of being beloved to all.

Etiquette of presenting a gift

Hadrat Wālā also says: "The person giving a gift must do it in private, away from everyone else. In fact, once he hands it over, he must move away from their immediately. On the other hand, the person receiving the gift must mention it to others."

I personally heard Hadrat Wālā making mention of certain large and small gifts in his general assembly. On one occasion he related to us with absolute joy: "A person gave me a quarter rupee, asked me to take one quarter from it and to return three quarters to him. He must have had some calculation in his mind for his own ease. I was most pleased by his informality."

The manner of presenting a gift must not be discomforting

Hadrat Wālā says: "A gift must be presented in a manner which does not cause any inconvenience to the recipient." This is why Hadrat Wālā issued a general prohibition in sending anything via the railway or through messengers. A lot of hardships have to be borne in obtaining the item from the railway office and the workers too have to bear difficulties. On one occasion, a person sent excellent quality melons by rail. The railway officer asked Hadrat Wālā's worker for a bribe. When the worker came and informed Hadrat Wālā he said: "Of what benefit is a gift which causes such hardships and inconvenience?"

Hadrat Wālā therefore sent the waybill back to the person who had sent the melons. The railway officer continued waiting. When he saw that the melons were about to get rotten, he sent a message: "Very well, there is no need to give me any money, come and fetch the melons." However, he was informed that Hadrat Wālā is not going to collect them. The guard then brought them personally, but he was informed that the waybill had been sent back and he must now do whatever the law requires of him. The melons were auctioned. Subsequently, a person related to Hadrat Wālā that many of the railway officers who were Hindus were speaking among themselves and saying: "We have eaten many stolen items but never anything like these melons. Although they were excellent, it seemed as if we were eating excreta." They never stole anything again. When Hadrat Wālā heard this, he said: "These worthless fellows hurt a Muslim's heart, that is why they did not enjoy them." This incident became well known. On another occasion, a new railway officer demanded a bribe, so the old one said to him:

"He never gives any money, do not ask him." No one ever asked for anything after that. However, Hadrat Wālā would himself send something or the other to the person because he was the means of conveying the gifts. But he never gave any money to the officer.

Statements related to gifts

The following statements are quoted from *Ashraf al-Maʿmūlāt.*

1. Three types of gifts: A person from Delhi arrived with some questions on inheritance and wanted to offer something to Hadrat Wālā. He said to the man: "I will not accept it." He added: "Nowadays the things which are given to the pious personalities as gifts can be divided into three categories. (1) Given for worldly reasons. This is a bribe. (2) For reward in the Hereafter. This is charity. (3) As payment for a religious reason, e.g. for issuing a fatwā. I do not accept a gift for any of these three reasons. However, I do accept a gift which is given out of love. I cannot accept a charity because I fall under the category of a rich person. It is not permissible to accept payment for religious reasons. As for bribery, it is unlawful according to everyone. As for the gift which is given solely out of love, it is Sunnah to accept it."

2. Presenting a gift while shaking hands: A person wanted to give a gift at the same time of shaking hands. Hadrat Wālā said: "This method was initiated by the progenies of Sufis in order to conceal the gift. It is against the Sunnah. Nowhere is it established that people used to give gifts to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in this way. This custom must be given up. A person's self is corrupted because every time someone shakes hands with him, he will expect to receive something. Shaking hands is a Dīnī act, it is incorrect to attach worldly motives to it."

3. Abstain from humiliating and constraining 'ulamā': A person sent a parcel via rail. The railway officer asked for four ānās[1] as a bribe and refused to give a receipt. Hadrat Wālā said: "We are not going to accept any parcels now. We will return them all. They have come to us as gifts not as transactions. There is no reason for us to tolerate such futile expenses. If anything comes to us without any inconvenience,

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[1] One ānā is one sixteenth of a rupee.

we will accept it, if not, we will return it." Hadrat Wālā also instructed a certain Maulwī Sāhib who was going to print a poster on the subject of guidelines for giving gifts to include the point that no one is to send any parcel to Hadrat Wālā via the railways because it takes away a lot of time. Hadrat Wālā then said to us: "People think that the Maulwīs are only bothered about acquiring food and they will never return anything which comes to them. They treat the 'ulamā' with scorn. A major objective of mine in laying down these rules is that the 'ulamā' must not be denigrated." When any parcels arrived in this way after this, Hadrat Wālā sent the waybill back. This shows that Hadrat Wālā does not have any value for this world and that he has a lot of foresight. He is conscious of the most subtle wisdoms towards which people do not even pay any attention. (The world comes to the people of Allāh but they repulse it).

4. Gifts on Fridays: "I have made a rule not to host people of the surrounding villages and towns on Fridays. I do not accept gifts from anyone on Fridays. In the same way, I do not accept a gift from a newcomer about whom I do not know anything. I have gauged the benefits of doing this from past experiences. Most people used to come to perform the jumu'ah salāh and would unnecessarily remain as guests at my place. This took away a lot of time, so I laid down this rule."

"Yes, if a person has come solely to meet me, he may do so whenever he likes. When I stopped hosting people on Fridays, I stopped accepting gifts from them on this day as well. I did this because it would not be appropriate to stop something which was not to my benefit and continue something which was to my benefit. This is why I stopped accepting gifts together with hosting people. Some people first present a gift and then tell me the work which they have with me. I find this most offensive. If anyone has any work with me, e.g. to take one of my written lectures or a ta'wīdh, he may take it without any formalities. There is no need to give me anything. Do they think this is a shop where a person buys and sells? If anyone gives me a gift and then wants me to do something for him, I do what he wants and then I return the gift to him. Yes, there is no harm in accepting a gift which is given solely out of love. As for an exchange [a gift in exchange for some work], I do not approve of it."

5. The reason for not accepting a gift from a newcomer: "I have made it a practice not to accept a gift from a newcomer. However, if his sincerity is ascertained through circumstances, I accept it. Those who are worshippers of customs feel that if you go empty handed to a shaykh you will return empty handed from him."

I [the compiler] now conclude this section on gifts. The reader must have learnt Hadrat Wālā's principles and preconditions for the acceptance of gifts. Hadrat Wālā's attitude and approach in this regard must surely be very clear now.

Principles related to tabarrukāt

Hadrat Wālā's approach to tabarrukāt

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā is overwhelmed by the oneness and purity of Allāh *taʿālā*. To accord each thing the rank which it deserves and to differentiate objectives from non-objectives are from among his distinguished qualities. These are qualities which are essential in a Mujaddid, reformer and a super-specialist physician of the Muslim ummah (Hakīm al-Ummah). This is why his approach to tabarrukāt is also extremely balanced. He does not deny the blessings of tabarrukāt. In fact, he has witnessed incidents of the blessings of his own tabarrukāt and also of the spiritual masters, and relates them with full confidence. However, he remains focussed on acquiring the actual wealth which the spiritual masters possessed – which enabled their tabarrukāt to have so much of blessings – and encouraged others to try and acquire that wealth as well. He always says: "The fundamental and original tabarrukāt of the spiritual masters is to acquire blessings from their statements, actions and spiritual conditions."

A request to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

When Hadrat Wālā's shaykh and mentor, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*, wanted to give over his library to Hadrat Wālā out of his extreme love for him, Hadrat Wālā replied with absolute respect and deference: "Hadrat! What is there in the books! Rather give me something from your blessed chest." Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was most pleased by this reply, went into a fervour and said: "Yes, indeed. What is there in the books?" Hadrat Wālā quotes the following couplet after relating this incident:

Cast the hundred books and hundred papers in the fire. Illuminate the heart with the light of truth.

Protection from excesses

Hadrat Wālā was not engrossed with tabarrukāt – neither in beliefs nor in practice – like the excesses which people commit nowadays. In fact he was so particular about protecting the masses from excesses that whenever he used to have his hair cut, he would ensure that he buried it. In this way, it could not get into the hands of anyone who would then do unacceptable things with it. He would also not allow his hair to remain with the barber so that he does not start selling it. Hadrat Wālā says: "I personally saw some people who were prepared to sell the hair of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib at high prices to those who had faith in him."

Respect to tabarrukāt

On one occasion, I was present with Hadrat Wālā in Meerut when a person who belonged to the spiritual family presented a piece of cloth which belonged to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib to each person in the assembly so he may kiss it and place it against his eyes. Hadrat Wālā said: "I did not like this act of his. It appeared to be deceitful."

Hadrat Wālā also said: "Whatever tabarrukāt of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib which I possessed, I gave them away to people about whom I was convinced that they will keep these items with more respect than my own self. I felt it difficult to be conscious of respect to them and I consoled my heart by saying to myself: 'Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's teachings are sufficient for blessings. If Allāh *ta'ālā* inspires me to act on them, there is no need whatsoever for these material blessings.'"

Hadrat Wālā has a lot of respect for the spiritual masters and intense love for them to the extent that he made this statement on several occasions: "The slightest act of disrespect towards the spiritual masters can result in external and spiritual deprivation." This is why although he is not overly occupied by them, he accords a lot of respect to them.

A person asked him: "Is it permissible to go to relieve one's self while wearing the tabarrukāt of one's shaykh?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Although it is permissible, it is also not obligatory. It is not essential to carry out every lawful act. My own attitude on

this subject is that when the *jubbah* (cloak) of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which is in Jalālābād – and regarding which I have heard the affirmation of its genuineness from our elders – is brought to Thānah Bhawan, then although it is permissible to stretch one's legs in the direction of the house in which it is placed, in most cases, I do not stretch my legs towards that house out of respect."

The blessed jubbah of Rasūlullāh

Hadrat Wālā went to see the blessed *jubbah* of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with real enthusiasm and yearning by asking its attendants to permit him to see it alone. The attendants moved away, Hadrat Wālā proceeded all alone, had a look at it with full enthusiasm and yearning, and pacified himself in this way. We do not know what emotions must have went through him at the time. They are known to none but him. The following couplet applies:

> Now who has the courage to ask the owner of the orchard as to what the nightingale said, what the flowers heard and what the morning breeze did?

Since the attendants to the *jubbah* were very concerned about Hadrat Wālā's feelings, they permitted him to have a look at it by himself. Normally, they do not allow the *jubbah* to be away from their supervision for a single moment.

The blessing of Hadrat Hājī ʿAbdullāh's ʿabā

There was a very righteous but ignorant man by the name of Hājī ʿAbdullāh. He had first pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* and then to Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā relates: "He gave me an *ʿabā* which was made of a very ordinary cloth with woollen fibres. I personally experienced the blessings of this garment in the sense that whenever I wore it, I would not even experience any whisperings of disobedience."

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to tabarrukāt: "I do believe in the blessings of items but I consider the excesses of people as regards beliefs and practices related to tabarrukāt to be unlawful."

An easy way of acquiring tabarrukāt

Hadrat Wālā says: "An easy way of acquiring tabarrukāt of the spiritual masters without the latter having to hesitate in this

regard is to give them one of your items as a loan and say to them: 'You may use this item for some time and then return it to me.' I personally saw Hadrat Hājī Sāhib acquiring tabarruk from a Roman Shaykh in the same manner. It really appealed to me. Although tabarrukāt are from the spiritual masters, I am not of their level whereby people can acquire tabarrukāt from me. However, there are some people who make such requests out of love and their noble thoughts about me. If I do not have anything to give them, I inform them of this way [of loaning an item]. This manner is very comforting because I do not have to hesitate in any way."

The way of Hadrat Wālā's attendants

I [the compiler] say: Some of Hadrat Wālā's intelligent attendants do the same thing. When people request, then Hadrat Wālā occasionally gives over his own special items to them. Many people make requests for fabric from Hadrat Wālā for their newborn children. In order to make it easy for him, Hadrat Wālā takes his very old kurtas and cuts them into lengths which will suffice new-born babies. When he is then asked for them, he has no hesitation in handing them over.

Hadrat Wālā's bequest

Hadrat Wālā stated in his will – *al-Istih-dār li al-Ihtidār* – "The items which were used by myself must not be used as tabarrukāt in the manner in which they are normally used. However, if a person – out of his love – becomes its owner in a Sharʿī manner and keeps it secretly with him, I have no objection to it. He must not announce it nor display it to others."

Glory to Allāh! Look at his system, his attention to rectifying the Muslim nation and safeguarding of limits!

I am now concluding this final section on Miscellaneous Principles.

Hadrat Wālā's principles and rules are absolutely rational and balanced

The reader must have gauged from all of Hadrat Wālā's principles and rules as related from *Panj Ganj Ashraf* that every aspect of his was systemised and there was a rational regulation for every matter. If anyone acted against it, he expressed his displeasure. However, Hadrat Wālā would never spy on anyone, but if a person's offence came into the open, he

would not tolerate it. Glory to Allāh! This approach is also in accordance with the Sharīʿah. Unprincipled people consider these principles to be harsh, whereas the entire pure Sharīʿah is a conglomeration of regulations and a system. This has also been the way of the spiritual masters of the past. Hadrat Wālā constantly quotes the proofs of the Sharīʿah and statements of the past personalities to support his practices. He delivers forceful lectures on the Sharʿī and rational need for a proper system and organization. Some of them were presented previously and a few are presented here to serve as examples.

People's criticism of Hadrat Wālā's system

Hadrat Wālā said: Nowadays people do not bother in the least about the comfort and discomfort of others. If a person lays down a system, they label him an authoritarian. You will see that I am very strict in these matters and very particular about a proper system. Some "well-wishers" said many things to me in this regard. One person said it directly in my face: "Your temperament is like the system of the British." How sad! As if there is no system whatsoever in Islam. According to him, Islam is synonymous to disorganization and inefficiency. Instead, had it been said that the British have some system like the Muslims, it could have been correct to a certain extent.

A system is more essential in Dīnī matters

It was the time for ʿasr salāh. A builder who was busy in his construction work asked the mu'adhdhin for permission to call out the adhān. The mu'adhdhin permitted him. Instead of calling out the adhān from the normal place, the builder went onto the roof of the kitchen where Hadrat Wālā's sitting-room was being constructed and called out the adhān from there. When he completed the adhān, Hadrat Wālā called him and asked: "Who gave you permission to call out the adhān?" He replied: "The mu'adhdhin."

Hadrat Wālā called the mu'adhdhin and reprimanded him saying: "Why did you permit him unnecessarily?" Hadrat Wālā then addressed those who were present: "Disorganization inconveniences others and the person himself. Just look from this one incident how many harms were caused. This builder left his work for a certain amount of time while the mu'adhdhin became unconcerned about his responsibility. It is not right to get into the habit of unconcern about one's responsibility. The

local residents have been unnecessarily disorientated. They will think that the adhān will now be called out from the roof and their houses will be exposed to the one standing on the roof. These residents are poor people, they will not say anything out of consideration, but they will certainly be inconvenienced and bothered."

"All these harms were caused because of a change in one's practice and as a result of disorganization. How sad! When it comes to worldly matters, every person has a system to which he pays special attention. But when it comes to Dīnī matters, there is so much disorganization and inefficiency that no system seems to exist. People assume that there is no system and organization in Dīn whereas this is absolutely wrong."

Rasūlullāh had a system for everything

The *Shamā'il Tirmidhī* states:

كان له عتاد في كل شيء

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *had the means for every [essential] matter.*

This stems from consideration and adherence to regulations, and proves his attention to a system. One day, one of his wives made a double fold for his bed. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* got a bit delayed in waking up that night. He said: "Something different was certainly done today." He then instructed for the bed to have just one fold. It is also possible for a person to perform optional salāhs in his bedroom without any proper system. But how can the distinguished task of running the Sultanate be achieved without a system? If there was no system and organization at all in Dīn, did this grand Sultanate come into the hands of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* without a proper system and organization? Never! There is so much of system in Dīn that on one occasion a Sahābī commenced the iqāmah and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* stopped him saying: "The person who called out the adhān has the right of iqāmah" It was also due to his system that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that judges must be from the Ansār and the mu'adhdhins must be from Habashah (i.e. they must be Africans) because they are strong, and their voices are therefore loud.

Hadrat Wālā said: "Every person must have a proper order and system in whatever he does. This will bring comfort to him and to others as well."

The purpose of systems

Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "I laid down all these practices and systems after my lengthy experiences. If anyone knows of better practices and systems than these, he may present them to me. I am prepared to accept them most happily provided I understand them. If not, I will expose the faults which I see in them. If the person then provides me with convincing answers, then – by Allāh – I am prepared to change all my systems. After all, this is not a Sharʿī issue. It has been laid down to make things easy for myself and my friends, and that too after many years of experience. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I laid down a programme in accordance with the Sharīʿah. After bearing all this in mind that it must be in accordance with the Sharīʿah and also to provide ease and comfort to both parties, and a person presents another programme, I will accept it. People give no proven advice when it comes to practices, but they are prepared to raise objections."

The law and courteousness cannot combine

Hadrat Wālā says: "In most cases, the law and courteousness cannot combine. Although my rules and regulations are considered discourteous, their value will be realized later on and people will hold on to them. In fact, even now when they see harms, they realize the value of my rules and regulations, they use them as references and they think of me. The fact of the matter is that I did not merely think them up. Rather, personal experiences constrained me to adhere to them. Anyone who experiences similar situations will also need rules and regulations of this nature. In fact, I pay a lot of consideration to the ease and comfort of those with whom I interact when I lay down these rules. Others will not be able to take them into consideration."

Spiritual masters of the past adhered to a system

Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "The spiritual masters of the past were so particular about a proper system that there was one master who had laid down the following practice: When a new seeker arrived as a guest, rotī and curry used to be sent to him in proportion. In other words, depending on how many rotīs

were sent to him, the amount of curry was in proportion to it. When the newcomer finished eating, the master would check the remaining curry and number of rotīs to check the proportion which was left over. If the proportion was not the same as when he had sent the food to him, he would say to the newcomer: 'This shows that there is no system in you while my temperament is very systematic. I will therefore not be able to accommodate you. You must go search for another shaykh who has no system in him."

The story of Hadrat Wālā Sultānjī

Two people presented themselves before Hadrat Sultānjī *rahimahullāh* with a view to pledging bayʿah at his hands. The two were talking along and one said to the other: "The pond in the musjid of our hometown is much bigger than the pond here." Sultānjī overheard this and summoned for them immediately. He asked them: "Have you measured both the ponds?" They replied: "We did not measure them but we are making a rough estimate." He said: "How can one rely on an estimate? Why did you make a statement without investigating first? Now go and measure the ponds." The two were filled with fear in case their statement is proven to be incorrect. Anyway, when they reached there and measured the pond, they concluded that it was certainly larger by one span. They were overjoyed at the fact that they were not proven wrong. They returned beaming with success and said: "That pond is certainly bigger." Sultānjī said: "You had said that the pond in your hometown is much bigger than this one. If it is bigger by just one span, can one say that it is much bigger? This shows that you do not have the quality of caution in you. You therefore cannot achieve anything here, you must go elsewhere." The shaykh did not accept their bayʿah.

After relating these incidents, Hadrat Wālā said: "Those elders used to test whoever came to them. I do not even test anyone. Yes, I certainly interact with the person in a manner which exposes all the person's essential and fundamental inclinations."

Hadrat Wālā's principles are supported by the writings of the elders

Many of Hadrat Wālā's principles are supported by the written works of the elders. When Hadrat Wālā used to come across them or hear of them, he would be intensely satisfied and

overjoyed. He says: “Although I did not lay down my principles after referring to different books, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, through the blessings of the elders, the same points which were practised by the past masters come into my heart. Normally, people are disappointed when they find support from the people of the past because they will no longer be considered to be initiators of a practice. On the other hand, I am overjoyed when I come across such support and I thank Allāh *taʿālā* because I am now satisfied with what I laid down.”

Hadrat Wālā quotes a lot from *Tabaqāt Kubrā* – a book from which he is presently selecting extracts – to show how his principles are supported. In short, Hadrat Wālā’s programme is not something new. Instead, he revived the same old programme which had died and which had become so strange that it was now considered to be a completely new programme.

Hadrat Wālā’s practices are supported by the writings of Shaykh Akbar

I now present a few practices of Hadrat Wālā which are supported from the work of Shaykh Akbar *rahimahullāh* titled *al-Amr al-Muhkam al-Marbūt fī mā Yalzimu Ahlu Tarīqillāh min ash-Shurūt* (the definitive and fixed order as regards the prerequisites which are essential for those treading the path of Allāh).

(1)

ولا معنى الشفقة والرحمة إلا أن تنقذ أخاك من النار إلى الجنة، وتنقله من الجهل إلى العلم، ومن الذم إلى الحمد، ومن النقص إلى الكمال.

There is no meaning for affection and mercy apart from rescuing your brother from the Hell-fire and conveying him to Paradise, from ignorance to knowledge, from dispraise to praise and from imperfection to perfection.

(2)

فلا بد من مؤدبه وهو الأستاذ، فإن هذا الطريق لما كان في غايته الشرف والعزة حفت بالآفات والقواطع والأمور المهلكة من كل جانب، فلا يسلكه إلا شجاع مقدام، ويكون معه دليل علام، وحينئذ نفع القائدة، فعلى الشيخ أن يوفي حق مرتبته وعلى المريد أن يوفي حق طريقه. إعلم أن مقام الشيخوخة ليس هو الغاية، فإن الشيخ أيضا طالب من ربه ما ليس عنده، فإن الله يقول لنبيه عليه السلام: وقل رب زدني علما. فصفته الأستاذ أن يكون عارفا بالخواطر النفسانية

والشيطانية والملكية والربانية، عارفا بالأصل الذي تنبعث منه هذا الخواطر، عارفا بحركاتها الظاهرة. عارفا بما فيها من العلل والأمراض الصارفة عن صحة الوصول إلى عين الحقيقة. عارفا بالأدوية وأعيانها. عارفا بالأزمنة التي تحمل المزيد فيها على استعمالها. عارفا بالأمزجة. عارفا بالعوائق والعلائق الخارجة مثل الوالدين والأولاد والأهل والسلطان. عارفا بسياستهم ويجذب المريد صاحب العلة من أيديهم. هذا كله إذا كان للمريد له رغبة في طريق الله وإن لم يكن له رغبة فلا ينفع.

A seeker is in dire need of someone who disciplines him. He is known as a teacher, muʿallim and shaykh. Since this path is on the highest level of nobility and honour, it is surrounded by calamities, obstacles and an inundation of destructive matters. None can tread this path except the one who is brave, courageous, determined, and steered by an experienced and expert guide. Only then can the benefit of treading this path be realized. This is why it is incumbent on the shaykh to fulfil the responsibility of his role (of disciplining and instructing) and on the murīd to fulfil the rights of the path. Understand well that the rank of being a shaykh is not the ultimate objective because the shaykh is also seeking a rank which he does not have at present. After all, Allāh taʿālā *instructs Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *to supplicate: "O Allāh! Increase me in knowledge." This is why the qualities of a shaykh and teacher are that he must be fully conversant with inclinations of the self, and also satanic, angelic and divine inclinations and thoughts. Furthermore, he must also know: (1) the source from which these inclinations form, (2) the external movements of these thoughts (in other words, the external manifestations of thoughts), (3) the ailments and defects which would prevent the seeker from reaching the reality, (4) the medications, treatments, conditions and realities of the ailments, (5) the times when the murīd will be able to consume more of the medications, (6) the different temperaments of the murīds, (7) the external contacts and impediments, such as parents, spouses, children and authorities of the murīd, and (8) his management capabilities. The shaykh must be able to rescue the murīd from the clutches of these impediments. All this will only be possible if the murīd has some desire in the path of Allāh* taʿālā. *If he has no desire, he will not benefit in any way.*

(3)

ومن شرط الشيخ أن لا يترك المريد يبرح من منزله البتة إلا بإذنه لحاجة يوجيه فيها.

It is a prerequisite for a shaykh not to allow his murīd to be free to go wherever he likes. He must seek the permission of his shaykh before leaving his house and for the purpose for which he is going out.

(4)

ومن شرطه أن يعاقب المريد على كل هفوة تصدر منه ولا سبيل إلى الصفح عنه في زلة، فإن فعل فلم يوف حق المقام الذي هو فيه، فهو إمام غاشٍ لرعيته غير قائم لحرمة ربه، فإن النبي عليه السلام يقول من أبدى لنا صفحة أقمنا عليه الحد.

One of the prerequisites of a shaykh is to reprimand the murīd for every slip up which he commits and there is no way of overlooking any mistake of his. If he pardons him, he will not be fulfilling his responsibility as a shaykh. Instead, he [the shaykh] will be a ruler who is cheating on his subjects and will not be upholding the sanctity of Allāh taʿālā. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: We will promulgate the penal law on the one who displays his face to us (i.e. the one whose sin is exposed).

(5)

الشيخ إذا لم يكن صاحب ذوق وأخذ الطريق من الكتاب وأفواه الرجال، وقعد يربي به المريد طلبا للمرتبة والرياسة فإنه مهلك لمن تبعه لأنه لا يعرف مورد الطالب ولا مصدره، فلا بد أن يكون عند الشيخ دين الأنبياء، تدبير الأطباء وسياسة الملوك، وحينئذ يقال له أستاذ، ويجب على الشيخ أن لا يقبل مريدا حتى يختبره.

If a shaykh does not have the correct temperament and merely acquired the path [of Sufism] from books and what he heard from people, and seated himself to train and tutor murīds with a view to seeking position and authority, he will destroy whoever follows him. This is because he cannot fathom the starting point and destination of the murīd. It is therefore essential for a shaykh to possess the Dīn of the Prophets ʿalayhimus salām*, the planning of physicians and the authority of kings. Only then can he be termed an ustādh. It is incumbent on a shaykh not to accept any murīd without testing him.*

(6)

ومن شرطه أن يحاسب المريد على أنفاسه وحركاته، ويضيق على قدر صدق في اتباعه، فإنه طريق الشدة، ليس للرخاء فيه مدخل، لأن الرخص إنما هي للعامة.

One of the prerequisites of a shaykh is to take stock of every moment of activity and inactivity of his murīd. The more obedient the murīd is, the more strict he must be on him because this is a path of severity; there is no place for leniency in it. Concessions are only for the masses.

(7)

ومتى رأيت الشيخ ترك المريد يستدل عليه في المسائل بالأدلة الشرعية أو العقلية ولا يزجره ويحره عليها، فقد خانه في التربية. والأولى بالشيخ إذا رأى المريد يجنح إلى استعمال عقله في النظريات ولا يرجع إلى رأيه في ما يدله عليه، فليطرده عن منزله، يفسد عليه بقية أصحابه ولا يفلح هو في نفسه. ويجب على الشيخ إذا علم حرمته سقطت من قلب المريد أن يطرده عن منزله بسياسته فإنه أكبر الأعداء، ويجب له الإشتغال بظواهر الشريعة وطريق العبادة في العموم.

When you see a shaykh leaving his murīd free to discuss issues with him through Sharʿī and rational proofs, and he does not reprimand him for doing this, then the shaykh has cheated in the murīd's rectification. When a shaykh sees his murīd resorting to his intelligence on different issues and abstaining from following the opinions of his shaykh, then it is better for the shaykh to expel him from his assembly [or from his Khānqāh] because he will corrupt the minds of his other companions while he himself will not succeed in any way. When a shaykh realizes that respect and awe for him has come out of the heart of his murīd, he must expel him from his place through some strategy because he is his worst enemy. It is incumbent on such a person to occupy himself with the external injunctions of the Sharīʿah and the general forms of worship.

(8)

ويجب على الشيخ أن يكون له وقت مع ربه ولا يتكل على ما حصل له من قوة الحضور.

It is incumbent on a shaykh to set aside a time for himself in which he is in private communion with Allāh taʿālā. *He must not rely on the strength of presence which he has already acquired.*

(9)

ومن شرط الشيخ أن لا يترك مريده يجالس أحدا سوى إخوته الذين معه تحت حكمه، ولا يزور ولا يكلم أحدا في خير ولا شر، ولا يتحدث بما طرأ عليه من كرامة ووارد مع إخوته، ومتى تركه الشيخ يفعل شيئا من هذه الأفعال فقد أساء في حقه.

One of the prerequisites of a shaykh is that he must not allow his murīd to sit with anyone except his brothers in the path who are occupied in the same task under the same shaykh. [The shaykh must advise him] not to visit anyone, not to allow anyone to visit him and not to converse with anyone irrespective of whether it is a good or evil subject. If he experiences any supernatural feat or inspiration, he must not mention it to even his brothers in the path. If the shaykh leaves him to do any of the above, he has defaulted in fulfilling his murīd's right.

(10)

ومن شرطه أن لا يجالس تلاميذه إلا مرة واحدة في اليوم والليلة.

It is essential for a shaykh not to sit more than once a day with his murīds.

(11)

ولا يترك الشيخ المريدين يجتمعون أصلا دونه إلا جمعتهم بحضرته، ومتى تركهم يجتمعون دونه فقد أساء في حقهم.

The shaykh must not permit his murīds to gather among themselves except for in his own assembly. If he permits them to assemble among themselves while he is not there, he has defaulted in fulfilling their right.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this section – *Panj Ganj Ashraf* – is now concluded. I am also concluding this chapter on Spiritual Instruction with the following conclusion.

Conclusion

My thirty-year service

The statements and instructions of Hadrat Wālā which were presented as examples in this chapter on Spiritual Instruction certainly do not require any assessment or evaluation. It is like speaking about the high qualities of musk before a perfumer. This is especially so if it is done by a novice like myself who is nothing but a copier. How can I ever give my opinions!?

However, I can definitely say that although this sinful, ill-mannered and heedless fellow never had the inspiration of practising strictly on the statements and instructions of Hadrat Wālā, I had – during this thirty-year service – the opportunity of hearing such facts and sciences which made the path absolutely clear to me. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Whether I tread the path or not is another matter, but the truth has been made as clear as the light of day. Whether one accepts it or not, during this thirty-year period, the correctness of the following couplet is established without any exaggeration through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the focus of Hadrat Wālā:

> After thirty years it became clear to Khāqānī that a single moment in Allāh's remembrance is better than the kingdom of Hadrat Sulaymān *ʿalayhis salām*.

Whether one is inspired or not is another matter. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with sound understanding and the inspiration to practise through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā. May He save us from the plots of the self and Satan, keep us away from every deviation and misguidance and convey us to our Real Objective [Allāh *taʿālā*]. Āmīn.

In short, I am merely a narrator of Hadrat Wālā's statements. May Allāh *taʿālā* – through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā – give sight to this blind fellow, and may He enable me to witness that treasured splendour. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

Revival of Dīn

By the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā did not leave any department of Dīn without having fully investigated and researched it. This is especially so with regard to Sufism where not a single essential part was left concealed or ambiguous, and which was not fully analysed by Hadrat Wālā through his writings, statements and conditions. All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā made the path of Dīn so clear that there is no reason for any seeker of the truth to remain confused. The veils of fabricated customs and innovations which were covering the truths were lifted by Hadrat Wālā and he displayed Dīn in its pristine purity. The doors of rectification of character which had been shut for centuries were opened in these worst of times by Allāh *taʿālā* at the hands of Hadrat Wālā. The precedence of fabricated customs and innovations

had completely concealed and adulterated the realities of the Sharīʿah and Sufism, people were immersed in superfluous actions which caused them to go thousands of miles off the course of the true path. In short, confusion reigned and there was a severe need for the revival of Dīn. The mercy of Allāh *taʿālā* was directed towards the Ummah and this need was fulfilled at the hands of Hakīm al-Ummah. All praise is due solely to Allāh *taʿālā*.

By the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā removed the murkiness which existed in all departments of Dīn – especially of Sufism – and in so doing, separated the milk from the water. He made all the essentials of Dīn so crystal clear that now – Allāh willing – the seekers of the Dīn will have no difficulty in searching for the truth for many centuries to come.

Hadrat Wālā's revivalist teachings are sufficient for two centuries

I recall the statement of a distinguished person at this point. There was an assembly of Hadrat Wālā's associates. They were all expressing their extreme sorrow over the fact that they cannot seem to see anyone on the level of Hadrat Wālā. The person said: "What is the need to even worry about it? By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā has prepared such a pot and placed it before everyone that – Allāh willing – no one will have to worry for at least two hundred years. All he has to do is dish out the cooked food from that pot and continue eating."

A special type of tranquillity enveloped everyone who was present and the grief was replaced by relief.

Glory to Allāh! The man was certainly correct because through the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā has so thoroughly cleaned the path to Dīn and reaching Allāh *taʿālā* and removed all dirt and grime from it, that the seekers will experience no hardship in treading the path for many centuries. They will be able to reach their Real Objective very easily. I recall an incident which occurred just today – 16 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1354 A.H. Hadrat Wālā related the gist of a seeker's correspondence. He first sought permission to come to Hadrat Wālā, as per Hadrat Wālā's practice, he asked him the reason for wanting to come. The man replied: "To acquire spiritual blessings." Hadrat Wālā wrote back and asked: "What if you do not acquire spiritual blessings?" The man replied: "I have no complaint even if I do not acquire any spiritual blessings. I will be pleased by the will

and decree of Allāh *taʿālā*." Today Hadrat Wālā wrote back to him: "Very well, tell me what do you consider to be spiritual blessings?"

After relating the gist of the above, Hadrat Wālā addressed those who were present in the assembly: "I do not want any matter to be left cloudy. It must become absolutely crystal clear. There must not be a single pebble, rock, incline or decline on the path. It must be absolutely smooth and level. A person must be able to shut his eyes and continue moving without any obstacle. Unfortunately, this is my "crime" for which I have been maligned and due to which I have been accused of being too harsh."

A total exposition of the tricks of the self

Hadrat Wālā exposed such subtle tricks of the self which were concealed from many senior masters. There was general inattention to them, thus resulting in deprivation from a complete rectification of the self. Many senior masters had to acknowledge this feat of Hadrat Wālā. Even if a person having the slightest affinity with the path was to closely examine Hadrat Wālā's themes related to rectification, he too will have to make the same acknowledgement. The reader too must have affirmed this after reading the present chapter.

Dreams of the righteous

I recall a true dream of a scholar who was a spiritual master himself and had pledged bayʿah to another shaykh of the same spiritual lineage. He saw Hadrat Hājī Sāhib saying to him in a dream: "You have certainly acquired spiritual affinity. However, if you desire rectification of your character, you must revert to Maulwī Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib."

Many seekers received similar unseen instructions through true dreams and many continue receiving them to this day.

The secret behind Hadrat Wālā's fine sight

The secret behind Hadrat Wālā's fine sight in the field of rectification is that he himself keeps a fine and critical sight on his own self all the time, and monitors its ups and downs. This is why he is so proficient in assessing the ups and downs of the self, and the fluctuations in human emotions. He says: "It is very difficult for anyone to conceal the thievery of his self from me because I have a lot of experience with the ups and downs

of the self and am well-versed with the fluctuations of the heart."

Hadrat Wālā's fine temperament and excessive dhikr

First of all, Allāh *taʿālā* created Hadrat Wālā with a very fine temperament and with a very high level of perception. Those who have observed him know fully well that he is the Hadrat Mirzā Jān Jānā *rahimahullāh* of his time as regards his fine temperament, perceptiveness and fastidiousness. His excessive dhikr has fine-tuned this natural disposition even more. This is why he can immediately perceive every good and bad thing. While conversing one day, he said: "My nature is such that a good thing has an immediate effect on me. The same can be said of a bad thing. However, it is an immense grace of Allāh *taʿālā* that I have a natural aversion towards bad things. This is why I stay away from them."

I [the compiler] say: A sound disposition and fine perception are the causes of this. It is essential for people of such sound disposition and fine perception to be averse to evils because the slightest incidental obscurity can have an effect on them. This obscurity could lead to pain, then to averseness and then to petrifaction.

Expertise in diagnosing ailments of the self

This world is a conglomeration of good and evil – every type of good and evil has to be seen and heard, perceptions differ and inclinations are diverse. A personality having a perceptive disposition as that of Hadrat Wālā is therefore an expert at identifying, diagnosing and treating all the intricacies of the self and all the changes and fluctuations which take place in the heart. Such an expert can easily catch out the subtlest of thieveries of people. This is an explanation of the statement which Hadrat Wālā made above: "It is very difficult for anyone to conceal the thievery of his self from me because I have a lot of experience with the ups and downs of the self and am well-versed with the fluctuations of the heart."

There are countless incidents which testify to the correctness of this statement. A person wrote about the death of his daughter-in-law. The manner and tone in which the man expressed his grief immediately made Hadrat Wālā to suspect that the man had been lustfully desiring his daughter-in-law.

The man could not deny it when Hadrat Wālā questioned him about it.

Hadrat Wālā says: "When a seeker comes to me, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I can – in most cases – assess the overall condition of his self from his speech and demeanour. From this I know what type of treatment to mete out to him."

Each person is treated according to his condition

I [the compiler] say: I certainly observe this all the time. The manner in which Hadrat Wālā treats a person is most certainly proved to be the correct treatment for him. This, notwithstanding the fact that other observers may even feel astonished.

Quite some time back a youngster came to Hadrat Wālā and requested bayʿah with much faith. Hadrat Wālā did not disregard him but deferred him in a formal way by saying: "I want you to study *Islāh ar-Rusūm* and then decide." Out of my concern for the youngster, I purchased a copy of this book with my money and gave it to him. He looked at the book and went away. Later on it was learnt that he had become angry with his father and fled from there. Hadrat Wālā issued a warning to me by saying: "When I treat a person in a particular manner, I do not like anyone to interfere." He then went into a lengthy explanation to me on the subject of Allāh *taʿālā* conferring understanding to a person for the task to which He appoints him. Hadrat Wālā said: "Allāh *taʿālā* appointed me to the task of training and rectification. This is why He also conferred me with its true recognition – how each person must be treated, who is a genuine seeker and who is not. If a person is not a genuine seeker, my heart does not accept him at all. It rejects him immediately although I do not even have full details about his heart at the time. If a person eats a fly by mistake, although he does not have knowledge of it at the time of eating it, the stomach recognizes it very well and never accepts it – it expels it immediately."

Hadrat Wālā's proficient diagnosis

The above incidents were related to perceptions. They affirm my statement when I said that Hadrat Wālā is a treasure house of perceptions and emotions. He is so intuitive that even the greatest of psychologists cannot compare with him. I just recalled an incident in this regard. Recently a police officer

wrote to Hadrat Wālā complaining about his wife who was constantly fighting with him and demanding on him to bring more money and to even accept bribes because they need the money for their son's wedding. He added: "I am severely distressed by the daily pressures from my wife and the constant fighting and arguing. I fear I may take an evil decision. I request your prayers and advice."

Hadrat Wālā wrote back and, while making reference to the "evil decision" (he was referring to separating from his wife), said: "You must not do this. You might bring more problems on yourself. As for the advice which you want from me, that you can get from experienced people. As for me, I am a manifestation of the following couplet:

> The one behind the curtain was right when she said with reference to a person who does not possess intelligence, courage, understanding and the power to think: "There is no one in the house."

However, instead of experience, I do have emotions and feelings, and I can give you my opinion on the basis of my feelings. When she is fighting and arguing with you, consider her to be a starling who is imitating Satan and view the episode as an amusement. There will be no anger."

The above reply proved most beneficial to the police officer. He wrote back and informed Hadrat Wālā saying: "Your advice brought a lot of peace. Hadrat Wālā really did say something very unique about women when he referred to them as the starlings of Satan. If one ponders over this statement deeply, many complexities are solved, apprehensions are removed and the anger which I was experiencing over her actions is not experienced when I think of Hadrat Wālā's statement. By Allāh! You made an excellent observation. I thoroughly enjoyed it and the anger which I felt towards her has been replaced by mercy."

Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* you benefited from it."

Hadrat Wālā then addressed me: "It is solely through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* that people derive immense benefit from small statements. Words in themselves do not have so much of effect [it is from Allāh *taʿālā*]. If mere words were so effective, note them down and see if the same effect is experienced." Hadrat Wālā then quoted the following couplet:

> O you lazy fellow! Why are you jealous of Hāfiz? The capabilities in his disposition and the excellence in his speech are bestowals from Allāh *taʿālā*.

Total expertise in internal training and spiritual treatment

By virtue of the fact that Hadrat Wālā is blessed with a very fine temperament and sharp perception, he can fully comprehend every type of emotion, feeling and perception. This is why he has – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* - total expertise in internal training and the treatment of spiritual maladies. This is observed and accepted by all, and is affirmed by the world when it accorded him the title of Hakīm al-Ummah. In fact, if we were to examine closely, one will realize that the vast amounts of facts and sciences about the path, and the intricate and fine points on rectification which emanate from his tongue and pen are by and large the effects of his own conditions and impressions. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> O friends! Listen to this story. This condition which is experienced at present is in fact the reality.
>
> If you follow my present condition, you will find its benefit in this world and in the Hereafter.

If we look deeper, we will conclude that Hadrat Wālā is fully occupied in his own purification. The different conditions which he experiences in the course of it and the experience which he gains are used as means for the training and rectification of others.

Consequently, when he delivers fervent talks on lofty conditions and the ways of rectification, those who have the aptitude are able to perceive that Hadrat Wālā is explaining his own conditions. Sometimes, he even states this clearly because he is naturally very simple and straightforward. Whenever he feels the need or whenever wisdom demands it, he unhesitatingly mentions his own good qualities and also the impositions of his self. He says on such occasions: “I am neither too humble nor proud. I speak the truth and I speak what is in my mind. I am naturally simple and straightforward. As a result, I have a free mind which is the effect of that

Majdhūb through whose prayers I was born.[1] The companionship of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* strengthened these qualities further because he himself was a very simple person. He would freely relate and mention his special qualities and shortcomings before all – even to his students and disciples."

Hadrat Wālā said this on numerous occasions: "Although I am not a pious person, all praise is due to Allāh I am not heedless of my rectification. I am always on the watch and say to myself: 'I have to change that particular condition in this way, and that particular defect must be rectified in this way.' In short, I am not satisfied with any condition.'"

Glory to Allāh! Hadrat Wālā's practice is totally in line with the following couplet of Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*:

> Continue digging and searching in this path. Do not take a rest for a single moment until your last breath.

Even today, Hadrat Wālā compiled a couplet which he asked someone to write with a broad pen on a thick board. He placed it on his desk so that it can serve as a constant reminder. The couplet is:

> Engage in excessive dhikr. Speak less. Remain silent when your disposition is excited.

When I asked Hadrat Wālā for this board so that I may copy the above couplet, he said: "Indeed. There are many concerns but I get the inspiration to carry them out sometimes and do not at other times."

Similarly, there was a time when he used to deliver talks and lectures. He said during that time: "When I find any matter within me which needs to be rectified, I deliver a talk on that subject. I benefit a lot from it. My talk on anger was delivered with the same objective." He also said: "Allāh *taʿālā* places such cures in the heart for many major spiritual ailments, and in this way they are rectified by Allāh's grace."

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[1] Refer to the beginning of the book where Hadrat Wālā's birth is described.

On the reverse of the same above-mentioned board, Hadrat Wālā had a calligrapher to write something which would serve as a reminder. It is quoted here:

1. Do not speak directly to a person who erred. Speak through an intermediary who is intelligent.
2. Instead of telling him yourself, ask him simple questions which would make him admit his error on his own. If he does not understand, end the conversation by informing him that there is no affinity between the two of you.
3. Continue prompting him to provide ways of making up for his error.
4. If possible, stipulate a slightly lighter form of redemption than the one suggested by him.
5. As a precaution, wait a bit and re-examine the situation before asking him to carry out your instructions.

Hadrat Wālā's journey to Delhi and Pānīpat

I recall another incident which portrays how Hadrat Wālā used to supervise and examine his self. Janāb Maulwī ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Gumthalwī personally related to me that he was with Hadrat Wālā on a journey. They were to travel from Nārnaul to Alaur, Alaur to Delhi and Delhi to Pānīpat. They performed jumuʿah in Nārnaul and spent the night there. Hadrat Wālā wanted to change his clothes at tahajjud time. The Maulwī Sāhib in whose charge was Hadrat Wālā's bag, took out a set of clothes and gave them to him. The kurtah had chikan[1] work on it. Hadrat Wālā said: "No. Bring the muslin kurtah." When he brought the muslin kurtah, Hadrat Wālā said: "Okay, you rather bring the chikan kurtah and keep this away." When he brought the chikan kurtah again, Hadrat Wālā said: "Do you know why I did this? When you brought the chikan kurtah, I thought to myself: This is a town, it will suffice to wear a muslin kurtah. After this, we will be going to Delhi, and a chikan kurtah for Delhi will suffice (because it will not be a cause of scorn before senior people and leaders). However, I acted against this thought [and asked you to bring the chikan kurtah]."

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[1] A special type of embroidery peculiar to the Lucknow area.

Anyway, this incident passed. After spending the night in Alaur, we proceeded to Delhi. His clothes had become quite dirty during this period, so when they were preparing to leave Alaur for Delhi, the Maulwī Sāhib asked whether he wanted to change his clothes. But Hadrat Wālā deferred it. The Maulwī Sāhib asked again in the train, but Hadrat Wālā deferred it again by saying he will change later on. They eventually reached Delhi and he still did not change them. While in Delhi also he did not change his clothes although they had become extremely dirty by now. When they left Delhi and reached Pānīpat, Hadrat Wālā took a bath immediately on his arrival and changed his clothes because he – due to his fastidious temperament – is very much disturbed by dirty clothes. We see to what extremes he went to make up for his thought [that it will not be a cause of scorn before senior people and leaders].

Glory to Allāh! This is the exact Sunnah of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. We read in the traditions how Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* removed his attractive garments and wore his ordinary clothes on the occasion of his entry into Bayt al-Maqdis as a conqueror, and how Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* cut one of the sleeves of his kurtah in order to make it appear unsightly.

Another incident portraying Hadrat Wālā's supervision of his self

I recall another incident. Quite some time back a man sent 500 rupees from someone's inheritance and requested that the money be spent for good and charitable purposes. Since the man had not obtained permission from Hadrat Wālā to send this money, he sent it back as was his norm. The man then wrote a letter in which he sought permission, apologized and provided full details. Hadrat Wālā also learnt from the letter that the permission of a few heirs was not obtained although permission was obtained for a major portion of the amount. Hadrat Wālā sent back a total prohibition saying: "Since the permission of certain heirs has not been obtained, you must not send the money." Later on Hadrat Wālā related this incident in his general assembly and said: "At the time when I was writing a total prohibition, I thought to my self that I should permit him to send the amount for which he obtained permission from all the heirs. It will be good because it would be of benefit to the poor. However, I said to my self: 'I see! You want to advise your teacher as well!?'"

Constant supervision of the self

Hadrat Wālā used the word "teacher" in the above incident. It is totally in line with the reality because he is fully aware of the deceptions of the self and understands its justifications very well. It is his night and day job to continually warn the seekers of their deceptive and conniving self. He does not confine himself to supervising the selves of the seekers alone. Rather, he constantly checks on his own self. The reader must have gauged this from the above-related incidents. He endeavours to the utmost not to give the self any opportunity of rising. He constantly watches it so that the slightest mark of a change does not develop in it.

Hadrat Wālā says: "If my wife happens to go anywhere, and there is any non-mahram woman in the house – whether a relative, guest, worker or girl – I give up going to my house during that period. If I have to say or listen to something really important, I stand on the porch and do it. I do not enter my house. I am relating this point to others so that they may take extreme precautions in this regard because, first of all, we cannot rely at all on the self. Secondly, it is also essential for us to keep our thoughts pure. In fact, we must also be cautious with minor non-mahram girls. Sometimes a person passes his hand over the head of a minor girl. This is done solely out of affection. But after passing the hand over the head for a short while, the self begins to have mixed up thoughts. I find that people are generally unmindful of these fine points. They are always under the assumption of affection [and continue passing their hands over such girls]. It is obligatory to be cautious in this regard."

Similarly, Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion: "I do not permit a young boy to sit in seclusion with me. Although this matter may appear insignificant, it is a very impressionable thing for the person who has faith and confidence in me. When he sees me taking such measures, he will think to himself: 'If he takes so much of precautions in safeguarding his self despite being a shaykh, we have to be even more cautious."

Continuous progress

The essence of whatever I said is that Hadrat Wālā is still constantly keeping a check on his self. Based on his continuous striving, he is progressing continuously. This is a

progress which is continuing all the time and which is generally not known. These are those internal actions regarding which Hadrat Wālā says: "They convey a seeker from one level to another without anyone knowing about it. Such a person is known as a Qalandar. He does not pay as much attention to optional acts of worship as he does to his heart and actions of the heart. For example, when he experiences an incident, his heart immediately connects him to Allāh *taʿālā* through patience, gratitude, submission, servitude and so on. This becomes a spiritual action of its own and is of such a level that it conveys the person from one point to another very elevated point. Since incidents are experienced all the time and the person is keeping a check on his heart constantly, he is making spiritual progress all the time. He surpasses the one who, although he is occupied with optional acts, does not pay too much attention to the supervision of his heart."

Keeping a check on one's conditions for the continuity of spiritual affinity

I [the compiler] say: Let alone progress, even the continuity of spiritual affinity requires constant supervision of the heart – as is the practice of Hadrat Wālā. This is also supported by a teaching of Hadrat Shaykh Akbar *rahimahullāh*. In his book *al-Amr al-Muhkam al-Marbūt fī mā Yalzimu Ahlu Tarīqillāh min ash-Shurūt* (the definitive and fixed order as regards the prerequisites which are essential for those treading the path of Allāh), he emphasises on the spiritual masters to constantly keep themselves in check. In this regard, it is also obligatory on a shaykh to set aside some time for seclusion with Allāh *taʿālā*. He writes:

فمتى لم ينفقد الشيخ حاله في كل يوم بالأمر الذي حصل له به هذا تمكين كان مخدوعا بحيث أن نسترقه العادة ويجره الطبع ويريد الخلوة ساعة فتفقد الأنس ويجد الوحشة، وكذلك في توكله وادخاره في كل حال اكتسبته النفس مما لم تفطر عليه لأنه سريع الذهاب وقد رأينا شيوخا سقطوا، نسأل الله لنا ولهم العافية. قال الله تعالى: إن الإنسان خلق هلوعا، إذا مسه الشر جزوعا، وإذا مسه الخير منوعا. فقد جمع في هذه الآية كل رذيلة في النفس وأبان فيها أن الفضائل ملتبسة لها ليست في جبلها، فالتحفظ واجب.

If a shaykh does not supervise his conditions in a manner through which he can acquire steadfastness (i.e. the practice of continuous obedience and excessive dhikr), he may very well fall

into deception. His disposition and old habits will gradually draw him to themselves. Consequently, even if he wants to remain in solitude, he will not have affinity with it. In fact, he will recoil from solitude. The same applies to all those conditions which are not in line with the disposition and nature of the self. He must not rely on the acquisition of those conditions because they disappear very quickly. We saw many spiritual masters falling from their position. We ask Allāh taʿālā *for wellness for them and us. Āmīn. Allāh* taʿālā *says: "Surely man is created with a restless disposition. When misfortune befalls him, he is impatient."[1] Allāh* taʿālā *combined all the evils of the self in this verse and explained that the virtues which the self has are not inherent to it. It is therefore obligatory to preserve them.*

Hadrat Shaykh Abū Madyan

I recall a statement which Hadrat Wālā quoted to us of Hadrat Shaykh Abū Madyan Maghribī *rahimahullāh* who was one of the mentors of Hadrat Shaykh Akbar *rahimahullāh*. It is quoted in *Tabaqāt Kubrā*. It is appropriate to our subject and supports what we said. It is quoted verbatim from Hadrat Wālā's *Intikhāb Tabaqāt Kubrā*:

كل فقير لا يعرف زيادته ونقصه في كل نفس فليس بفقير

A dervish who does not perceive his (spiritual) increase and decrease all the time is not a dervish.

Unseen supervision

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this is a continuous and permanent condition of Hadrat Wālā which is continually exposed through his words, actions and conditions. Apart from the above-related incidents, I can easily recall a few other incidents. They are presented in brief. I related my own spiritual restlessness to Hadrat Wālā on one occasion. As was his practice, he immediately consoled me completely with a most impressive theme. He then said in a tone of absolute remorse: "You are relating your condition to me and getting yourself consoled and comforted. If I experience any anxiety, who can I go to for consolation?" He added: "All praise is due to Allāh that He Himself guides and steers me on such occasions and unties my knots."

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[1] Sūrah al-Maʿārij, 70: 19-20.

Constant imposition on the self

On one occasion he heard about a shaykh who makes his murīds to engage in dhikr for two hours at a time but they [the murīds] are totally free as regards their dress, appearance and other matters. They do not confine to the Sharīʿah in this regard. Hadrat Wālā said: “What is so difficult about striving for an hour, two hours or even four hours? Only that person must come to me who wants to impose on his self night and day [all the time].”

This shows that it is in itself the condition of Hadrat Wālā, i.e. he keeps his self in check all the time and emphasises this point on his associates.

A person is attracted to beauty

A scholar was overwhelmed by his worship of beauty. Hadrat Wālā instructed him to abstain by saying: “You must not look [at women] even if you have to lose your life in the process.” The man had written: “I am so overcome by my attraction towards beauty that I am even very fastidious about placing ordinary items in a well-arranged and systematic way. In the same way, I am extremely attracted to beautiful women.” Hadrat Wālā replied in very eloquent Arabic:

بعضه خير فاشكروا عليها، وبعضه شر فانصبروا عنها، أي غضوا البصر حيث أمر الشارع بالغض ولو بتكلف شديد يحتمل ذهوق الروح، فإن الله تعالى غيور وتشتد غيرته على النظر إلى ما نهى الله أن ينظر إليه، فالحذر الحذر أن يسخط المحبوب الأكبر.

Some of it is good, so be grateful for it. Some of it is bad, so lower your gaze wherever the Sharīʿah orders you to lower your gaze even if it means imposing severely on the self to the extent of destroying it. Allāh taʿālā *abhors it when an inviolable act is committed, and He abhors it most when a person looks at something which He prohibited him to look at. So beware! Beware of bringing on the wrath of the Greatest Beloved.*

Look at the severity with which Hadrat Wālā prohibited the man!

Hadrat Wālā also says: “This path contains ‘chickpeas of steel’ which they have to chew on for the rest of their lives, and it is as if the birth is stopped.”

The fruits of spiritual striving

Although Hadrat Wālā does not impose external striving and exertion, a person certainly has to keep himself occupied in spiritual striving. However, after some time, spiritual striving becomes extremely enjoyable.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

حفت الجنة بالمكاره

Paradise is encircled by hardships.

As Hadrat Wālā himself says: "A few days of striving make the rest of the journey easy."

Hadrat Wālā was travelling to Kālpī when a very senior police officer who spoke very good English and was also my [the compiler] classmate happened to be on the same train. I was also with. This friend pointed towards me and said to Hadrat Wālā: "After seeing his condition [and how he has changed], I cannot pluck the courage to come to you." Hadrat Wālā replied immediately: "You must not look at him. The clock-winder winds the clock just once. Whatever changes take place thereafter take place on their own. First it will show one o' clock, then two, then three and so on."

What Hadrat Wālā meant was that he may consider it to be difficult at present but the difficulty will not remain once the bond with Allāh *taʿālā* is established. The heart will automatically want rectification. When that happens, he will happily want changes in his condition to take place. The difficulties which he is seeing before time are just imaginary difficulties. They must not be feared in the least.

> If you really want to, you must just continue traversing the path of love. O fellow traveller! Do not look to see if it is far or near.
>
> A lover feels the hardships before he goes mad in his love. Once he bears grief for a few days, he will enjoy happiness for the rest of his life.

In fact, his condition becomes such that if he perceives any deficiency in spiritual concern and supervision of his self, the seeker wastes away out of grief. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> A seeker may experience thousands of grief but rarely does he experience a deficiency in the happiness of his heart.

To sum up, the spiritual striving and exertion which Hadrat Wālā prescribes in the path soon becomes the nucleus around which the seeker's life revolves, his spiritual food without which he does not have any rest, and in whose absence he considers to be his own death. In essence, this is really the case because these spiritual exertions are the causes and signs of a living heart and the sources of eternal spiritual progress.

> If my heart has taken joy from the movement of his eyelids, then I am happy because this has added to the causes of my crying.

The acquisition of Tasawwuf is made easy

The Sufism of Hadrat Wālā is based entirely on the Qur'ān and Hadīth. This is obvious from his books *Masā'il as-Sulūk, at-Tasharruf* and *at-Takashshuf*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

الدين يسر

Dīn is easy.

My purpose of saying this is to show that the tasawwuf as taught by Hadrat Wālā is very easy, there is no difficulty in it. The reader too must have gauged from the themes of the present chapter that Hadrat Wālā really simplified the path. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. It is as though he paved a highway on which everyone – the elite and the masses, the scholars and the laymen, those who are free and those who are occupied, the healthy and the sick, the weak and the strong, the rich and the poor – can travel on very easily and without any fear.

A perceptive observer made the same observation when he said: "The sulūk of Hadrat Wālā is a royal sulūk." This is really the fact of the matter because Hadrat Wālā does not impose spiritual exercises and striving, does not order a seeker to sever ties, nor does he instruct him to give up luxuries and lawful things. Instead, he stresses: "Live in absolute comfort and rest so that love for Allāh *taʿālā* may develop in the heart and the temperament may feel energetic - which is an aid in acts of worship. However, do not stray towards obedience, watch the

self vigilantly, take courage in doing whatever has to be done, and also engage in some dhikr and spiritual practices based on how much one can bear and how much time one has. Allāh willing, realizing one's objective is certain. There is neither the need to eat less nor to sleep less. Both these exertions are to be left out in our times because the temperaments are overcome by weakness from before. However, it is essential to speak less and to interact less with people, but not so less that it results in retraction in the heart."

If this is not royal sulūk what is it? Hadrat Wālā himself says: "One does not need a blanket and tattered and torn clothes to be a Sufi. Instead, if Allāh *taʿālā* confers on a person, he can be a Sufi even while wearing two shawls and living as a king provided he acquires them in the correct manner."

The path is easy but we make it difficult

Glory to Allāh! Hadrat Wālā has simplified the path so much that there is no difficulty whatsoever in it.

> You have made the path so easy that we can say that you made the path the destination.

However, if a person does not follow the principles and makes it difficult on himself, it is no fault of the path; it is the haphazardness of the one treading it.

> If you consider it to be easy, you will certainly find love to be easy. But if you make it difficult on yourself, you will experience difficulties.

I quote a recent statement of Hadrat Wālā on this subject. He said: "The path is absolutely clear and level, but people make it difficult by their misuse and false premises. They fall into worries through their own doings. In fact, even the ʿulamā' are fallen into errors. A Maulwī Sāhib who is a senior ʿālim and intelligent man was, until now, worried over the fact that he still cannot get up for tahajjud without an alarm clock. He wrote: 'It is so sad that I am still dependent on these external things [to wake me up]. My heart still does not have that urge whereby I will have no need for an alarm and I am able to wake up automatically.'"

"I consoled him by writing: 'How many external things will you be able to save yourself from? Let alone one alarm, we are in need of countless other things. We need clothes, we need

shelter and numerous other necessities of life. These are all external things as well. If you cannot save yourself from so many things, why are you so worried about an alarm? When Allāh *taʿālā* Himself made us dependent on His bounties, why should we hope to be independent of them?'"

> If this is what the Master of my Dīn wants, then away with my contentment.

"If you cannot wake up without an alarm, what is the need to grieve? Allāh *taʿālā* has provided us with clocks and alarms, we must use them. The objective is to wake up – whether we wake up with an alarm or without it. If the objective is realized, why should you grieve over why you cannot wake up without an alarm?"

Allāh's special favour

After relating the above incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for placing the correct points in my heart through which people came out of darkness and entered into light, and the path became completely clear to them. When the lamp-lighter puts on the lamp, darkness is removed and the path is seen clearly. Allāh *taʿālā* then blessed him with eyes and legs. If he uses them, he will traverse the path without hesitation and reach wherever he wishes to go. If someone does not even lift his leg, places it haphazardly which causes him to trip and fall, or walks with his eyes closed, is it the fault of the lamp-lighter?! Allāh *taʿālā* says in the Qur'ān:

هٰذَا بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَّرَحْمَةً

These are sources of enlightenment from your Sustainer, a guidance and a mercy.[1]

This point came to my mind that *basā'ir* refers to eyes, guidance refers to the path, and mercy refers to the destination."

Hadrat Wālā said with real force and confidence on one occasion: "Even if I may not have the inspiration to practise, I thank Allāh *taʿālā* profusely over the fact that I do not have even an iota of doubt or misgiving about the path."

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[1] Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 203.

In short, Hadrat Wālā made the path absolutely clear and easy. If any person treads it according to the principles, Allāh willing, he can reach the destination very easily.

A Few Important Principles Which Would Help A Person To Benefit From Hadrat Wālā

I feel it would be appropriate to explain a few special and extremely important principles which – Allāh willing – will help a person tremendously to benefit from Hadrat Wālā. They are listed briefly to serve as a gist of the present chapter. Details have been learnt from this chapter itself. These principles are derived from them.

1. Studying books on rectification:

The first thing a seeker must do is to study Hadrat Wālā's book, *Qasd as-Sabīl*. He must study it carefully one or two times. A general overview of the path will be gauged from it and the objective will be learnt. If a person cannot understand it by himself, he should consult an intelligent person to explain it to him. If before reverting to Hadrat Wālā he studies some of his books, especially *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn, Islāh ar-Rusūm, Bahishtī Zewar* and his *Mawā'iz* which have been printed up to now, then he will learn some of the necessary details of the path. This will make it very easy for him when corresponding with Hadrat Wālā for his own rectification. Seekers who do not know the basics of the path write many unprincipled things to Hadrat Wālā which results in his having to ask questions repeatedly, thereby delaying the realization of one's objective. In fact, there were times when Hadrat Wālā wrote to some of them: "You must first study one hundred of my lectures and then write to me."

2. Remain focused on the objective

A person should neither request bayʿah at the beginning nor consider it to be essential because the fundamental objective is to learn the path. He should therefore request this first. There will be no harm in requesting bayʿah once complete mutual affinity is established. However, if Hadrat Wālā says that complete mutual affinity has not been established, the seeker must accept it without any complaint. He must never ever insist on bayʿah. Instead, he must occupy himself more than before in acquiring affinity because it is a well known fact that

as long as Hadrat Wālā is not convinced of a seeker's genuine quest and does not perceive complete mutual affinity, he does not accept bayʿah. The joy of bayʿah is only experienced when these two points are established. Before that, there is no benefit in bayʿah. In fact, it could prove detrimental and harmful.

Some immature claimants of shaykhdom object against Hadrat Wālā and accuse him of being against the accepted principle of sulūk, viz. a shaykh must be desirous of proliferating the path. Hadrat Wālā said: "The path is not proliferated through bayʿah but through teaching and instruction. Do I ever reject teaching the path? In fact, I can say that – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – teaching the path is done so much here that it is probably not done to the same extent elsewhere. After all, I have no other activity here."

I [the compiler] say: It is really true. Hadrat Wālā is so desirous of proliferating the path that I do not think it can be found to such an extent anywhere else. He constantly says: "My heart desires to explain the reality of the path to the entire world as much as I have understood it. I am severely disturbed when people do not understand it and go to pains into thinking how I can cast it in their hearts. This is also one of the reasons why I am disturbed by people."

We constantly observe how freely and openly Hadrat Wālā explains facts and truths when the right addressee comes to him. He would go at length in explaining these truths in his blessed assembly and causes oceans to gush forth.

3. The best way of deriving benefit

The best way of deriving benefit from Hadrat Wālā is to first obtain permission from him and then to sit silently in his assemblies for a period of time. The seeker must listen attentively to his statements and observe incidents carefully so that he develops affinity with the path and with Hadrat Wālā, and learns the manner of rectification. Then once he returns to his place of residence, he must write to Hadrat Wālā describing one defect at a time. He must continue his rectification in this way. He must not mention the next defect without having rectified the previous one first. He may enquire from Hadrat Wālā about certain forms of dhikr during this period but not enquire about it without having commenced rectification of his

self first. This is because Hadrat Wālā certainly does not consider mere dhikr and spiritual practices to be enough for the realization of one's objective. When requesting permission to make dhikr, the seeker must inform Hadrat Wālā that he is already corresponding with him for his rectification. This is because Hadrat Wālā has many letters which he has to reply to and it is very difficult for him to remember without information from the seekers.

4. Remain firm on the principles of rectification

A seeker must supervise his self all the time and adhere to Hadrat Wālā's principles with awareness and courage for the rectification of his defects. Although he may experience some fatigue in the beginning, when he acts against his self repeatedly, he will start to experience ease by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*. Hadrat Wālā says in this regard: "It is only through repetition in deeds that deeds become easy. However, a seeker must not await ease. He must continue doing every deed even if he does not experience any ease throughout his life."

A seeker must also bear in mind Hadrat Wālā's statement with regard to courage. He says: "Courage which is not followed by success cannot be termed courage. It is merely an intention of courage. If full courage is resorted to in order to save one's self from shortcomings which are within one's control, there is no reason why a seeker should not succeed."

Hadrat Wālā also says: "If any mistake is committed due to lack of courage, the seeker must repent immediately and renew his courage. He must neither become despondent nor grieve over why the mistake was committed. The mistake will be atoned through action."

I feel it will be most beneficial to repeat Hadrat Wālā's statement from *Tashīl at-Tarīq* because it contains a complete course of action for the path. He writes: "Do not worry about actions which are not within your control, but be courageous in carrying out those which are within your control. If you commit an error, make up for the past by seeking forgiveness and renew your courage for the future. Together with courage, you must resort to ardent supplication."

5. The amount of dhikr must be appropriate

Once a seeker obtains permission for dhikr, he must set an amount which he can bear and for which he has time. It must not be so little that a seeker experiences no difficulty at all, nor so much that he cannot fulfil. As far as possible, he must not miss his dhikr and other spiritual practices. Missing them on any day results in immense lack of blessings. He must also make a practice of engaging in some form of dhikr while walking about and moving around. Hadrat Wālā said to me on one occasion: "Consider dhikr to be your essential task. You may speak when there is a need and then continue with your dhikr once again. Like a tailor who continues sewing and also speaks when there is a need. However, his actual focus remains on his sewing." Hadrat Wālā also taught one way of reducing one's speech. He said: "Do not initiate a conversation. If the other person asks something, reply according to the need and occupy yourself with dhikr once again. Similarly, do not go to anyone unnecessarily."

Hadrat Wālā also says: "Do not increase your interactions with people without any real need. If the heart feels a bit fatigued by dhikr and solitude, you may pacify your heart by sitting with your wife and children or with friends who are of your spiritual lineage. You may return to your dhikr once you feel reenergized." Hadrat Wālā considers total engrossment and total discarding of lawful activities to have harmful consequences.

6. Intention must be pure

The different forms of dhikr, salāh, recitation of the Qur'ān and other similar spiritual practices must be done with the intention of creating Allāh's love in the heart and acquiring His pleasure. These practices must not be done with an empty mind as a mere habit. The seeker must try to maintain the consciousness of Allāh *taʿālā* which is experienced when engaged in these practices even after completing them. Constant concern and consciousness are extremely necessary in this path.

7. Protect the heart from disruption

Keep yourself protected from all that would cause disruption to the heart. Preservation of one's health is included in this. Focus of the heart is the basis for benefit in this path.

8. Abstain from self-opinion and self-conceit

Hadrat Wālā considers self-opinion and self-conceit to be the worst obstacles in this path. He says: "If a person obliterates his opinions he will see the treasures which Allāh *taʿālā* showers on him – treasures which are well beyond his imagination. Obedience to one's shaykh - which is severely needed is included in this. Do not do anything on your own accord. In addition to obedience to one's shaykh being from among the etiquette of the path, it contains every type of ease and comfort for the seeker. It also makes him worry-free." The seeker should therefore hasten in informing his shaykh of his conditions and follow his recommendations. When the shaykh makes a recommendation, the seeker must follow it without any hesitation and objection. He must remain engrossed in his actions in accordance with the shaykh's recommendation accompanied by full confidence in him no matter how much the self may disapprove. Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* says:

> You will not be able to reach any station in this path if you do not endeavour. If you want success, you will have to obey your tutor.

The fundamental thing is to remain occupied, and its fruits will be borne in accordance with one's capabilities. Hadrat Wālā quotes the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* quite often:

> Do not be a slave to the condition of receiving a wage because the Master knows fully well how to nurture and sustain His slaves.

Hadrat Wālā also says with regard to self-obliteration: "Self-obliteration is the first step in this path and, in another way, also the final step. If a seeker has not acquired this quality, you must conclude that he has not experienced even a whiff of this path."

I [the compiler] say: Hadrat Wālā pays most attention to the development of this quality. If a seeker cooperates with him in the attention which he pays to it then – no matter how much the self may dislike it – even if it is accommodated rationally, the treasure of self-obliteration which is acquired after many years of striving will be acquired very quickly through Allāh's grace under the programme of rectification as devised by Hadrat Wālā.

9. Be mindful of the rights of fellow humans

Hadrat Wālā stresses consciousness of the rights of fellow humans – especially those rights which, if not fulfilled, cause harm to others. A seeker must therefore pay particular attention to not causing any harm to anyone – neither by his words nor by his actions.

10. The manner of rectifying defects

This final point makes mention of the manner of rectifying defects. It is a point which every seeker must adopt. Hadrat Wālā says that a seeker must list all his evils on a piece of paper, and continue adding to the list as he remembers and recalls them. He must also be continually wary of their treatment and utilize his courage for it. Those that are removed from his system through the treatment must be struck off from the list. Those that remain – whether completely or to a certain extent – must be left in the list. When the seeker writes to Hadrat Wālā for his rectification, he must mention the one shortcoming which he considers to be most important. If he is unsure about which one he must mention, he must draw a lot. The one which is drawn must be mentioned in the letter to Hadrat Wālā. If the seeker already tried treating it, he must make mention of this fact in the letter.

A seeker must not write more than one defect in the same letter. He must also note a few examples of the defect. He must continue writing letters about this one defect until he acquires firmness in abstaining from it. Once he acquires firmness – and Hadrat Wālā also testifies to the firmness and permits him to mention the next defect – he must present the next defect. He must rectify all his defects in this way.

A simple du'ā for the realization of one's objective

I conclude the above points with a du'ā' which my eyes coincidentally fell on while I was reading *Munājāt Maqbūl.* When my eyes fell on it, I thought to myself that it contains the essence of the sulūk of Hadrat Wālā and it is a du'ā' for the acquisition of all the lofty stations of tasawwuf. This also affirms the fact that Hadrat Wālā's teachings and conditions comply with the Qur'ān and Sunnah. If the seekers read it occasionally in order to create awareness, acquire blessings and receive inspiration for actions, then – Allāh willing – it will

help them tremendously in easing the path and realizing their objective. The duʿā’ is:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْأَلُكَ تَوْفِيْقَ اَهْلِ الْهُدٰى، وَاَعْمَالَ اَهْلِ الْيَقِيْنِ، وَمُنَاصَحَةَ اَهْلِ التَّوْبَةِ، وَعَزْمَ اَهْلِ الصَّبْرِ، وَجِدَّ اَهْلِ الْخَشْيَةِ، وَطَلَبَ اَهْلِ الرَّغْبَةِ، وَتَعَبُّدَ اَهْلِ الْوَرَعِ، وَعِرْفَانَ اَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ حَتّٰى اَلْقَاكَ.

O Allāh! I ask You strength for good deeds as possessed by those who are guided, actions of those who have conviction, sincerity of the repentant, determination of the patient ones, striving of the fearful [those who fear Allāh], aspiration of the yearning ones, worship of the pious, and cognition of the knowledgeable – until I meet You.

The reality of Hadrat Wālā's path of sulūk

I now conclude this chapter on spiritual instruction with a statement of Hadrat Wālā in which he explains the reality of his sulūk in a very clear and fine manner. I may have quoted it previously.

He said while speaking about something: "Here we only teach how to connect [with Allāh *taʿālā*]; we do not know what this Sufism is. We are students, we do not even possess knowledge. All we do is teach how to practise on the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Thereafter, whoever is to receive anything in this way receives it. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, when he receives it, it is something which no eye beheld, no ear heard of and no human heart ever imagined. Outwardly it is nothing – there is no ecstasy, no fervour, no exposition and no miracle. I occasionally snap my little girl's knuckles, and I tell her to pinch my cheeks. Now look at this, is it the action of a Sufi? When we went on hajj, my father purchased fish which was caught from the sea. I thought to myself that it must have salt in its flesh, so it should be cooked without salt. Subsequently, it was prepared without any salt and was cooked very well. Although no salt was added, there was a suitable amount of salt in it. In the same way, the "salt" over here [in the Khānqāh] is not added from the top. It is inside and displays its saltiness after it is cooked. The saltiness is only perceived by the one who eats. Similarly, a person who has never eaten a mango in his life cannot be made to understand its taste through mere explanations and similes. Its taste can only be perceived after it is eaten."

I [the compiler] say: Glory to Allāh! The genuine and prescribed tasawwuf is what is to be found with Hadrat Wālā. However, its fruits are only borne when a person reverts in accordance with the path and acts as prescribed. After all, according to Hadrat Wālā, success can only come with action.

> Act and continue with your [good] actions. Give up all your talking. This path requires nothing but action.
>
> The path requires action, not claims. Claims without action are of no essence.

When giving the example of a sea fish in the above-quoted statement, Hadrat Wālā stated that its salt becomes apparent after it is cooked. Thus, the precondition is that it must be cooked. This is where the seekers generally falter – they either do not do what they are supposed to do or they do it haphazardly. If a seeker acts according to Hadrat Wālā's above-listed principles, he will personally see the fruits and blessings of his statements and teachings. This has already been observed by countless seekers. Those who are deprived of it are deprived because of their own shortcomings. Hadrat Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

> Without striving you will not reach any station in this path. If you desire success, you will have to obey your tutor.

In the above-quoted statement, Hadrat Wālā said: "when he receives it, it is something which no eye beheld, no ear heard of and no human heart ever imagined". Hadrat Wālā gives the reason for it by quoting the statement of an erudite scholar. He said: "Those who are in the spiritual lineage of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib are able to reach Allāh *taʿālā* very quickly although there are not many spiritual exercises and striving in his system. The reason for this is that reaching Allāh *taʿālā* in this lineage is through a pull and not through treading. This pull is through the blessing of following the Sunnah because the fruit of following the Sunnah is becoming the beloved of Allāh *taʿālā*. And a "pull" is essential for becoming His beloved."

رَبَّنَا اَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُوْرَنَا وَاغْفِرْلَنَا اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ

O Allāh! Perfect for us our light and forgive us. Surely You have power over everything.

Gratitude

I thank Allāh *taʿālā* profusely for having enabled me to complete this most important chapter on "Spiritual Instruction" through His grace and kindness, and through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's attention and prayers. Due to my incapability I did not even have the courage to raise my pen to write it.

> The nights and days of separation from the beloved have come to an end. This is the good omen which I took. The ʿīd has passed and the task is completed.
>
> Say to the dawn of hope which has been secluded behind the veil of the unseen to come out so that the dark night may end.
>
> All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that when the bud of the flower rose up, the pride of the forest and the youth of the thorns came to an end.
>
> The distress of those long nights and grief of the heart – everything came to an end when they came under the shade of hair-locks of the beloved.
>
> O companion! The goblet must be filled with long life and a drink so that grief and intoxication may end through your efforts.
>
> Although my distress was due to your hair-locks, this problem too has been solved by the beautiful countenance of the beloved.
>
> Although no one considers Hāfiz to be worthy of anything, all thanks over the fact that the countless and endless striving has come to an end.

As far as possible I made a full endeavour to pen everything related to Hadrat Wālā's spiritual instruction. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* through whose help countless essential issues and unique researches of Hadrat Wālā on this subject were presented.

I moved my tongue thousands of times but still could not express myself

However, when I think about Hadrat Wālā's great status in the field of spiritual instruction, I can take an oath and say that whatever I recorded appears to be totally insufficient. I am left

to regret the fact that I did not really write anything at all. As Ghālib said:

> There are thousands of wishes and I could lose my life over each and every wish. Many wishes issued forth but they were still insufficient.

As I said:

> This heart was not to be exposed, and so it was not. I moved my tongue thousands of times but still could not express myself.

Even if I were able to express Hadrat Wālā's status in the field of spiritual instruction according to what I have in my mind, his essential status would still remain concealed because true recognition of Hadrat Wālā can neither be realized by an unqualified person like me nor by anyone else. After all, only one or two personalities of this level come into this world after centuries. As per the statement of an observer, "It is futile to hope to find all of Hadrat Wālā's qualities in any of those who benefited from his company. No one can possess all of his qualities. Yes, someone will have certain qualities and another will have some other qualities." The person was certainly correct.

None could truly recognize Hadrat Wālā

I recall Hadrat Wālā's own written statement on this subject. Hadrat Wālā's nephew and special khalīfah, Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib – based on his special relationship with Hadrat Wālā – wrote a note to Hadrat Wālā in which he made reference to a certain Hadīth and asked with genuine enthusiasm: "Who is the most beloved to you from among all your associates." He also promised: "If you instruct me to keep this a secret for the rest of my life, I will not express it to anyone." Hadrat Wālā wrote back without any formalities: "Had there been anyone, I would not hesitate in saying who it is. The truth of the matter is:

> Everyone considers himself to be my friend, while the fact is that none could fathom my inner secrets.

No one had total and absolute affinity with him. And that in itself is the basis for unfamiliarity. It is possible that my own shortcoming is the cause of it."

Since Hadrat Wālā does not like to hurt anyone's feelings in the least, he prohibited him from divulging the above reply. However, Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib wrote back to him saying: "I feel it will be more beneficial for the seekers if [Hadrat Wālā's] reply is quoted in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. Perhaps someone will have the urge to develop total and absolute affinity with Hadrat Wālā."

Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib added: "By Allāh, I am extremely desirous of learning Hadrat Wālā's secrets, and this is the reason for my question. If the secrets are not beyond an unworthy person like myself to bear, may Allāh *taʿālā* enable me to learn them."

Hadrat Wālā replied as follows: "My dear one. It will be better if it is quoted. The only thing which was stopping me was that I might hurt the feelings of my beloved associates. Since there is a more important wisdom in quoting it, I agree to its disclosure. My dear nephew! Where do I have any secrets? I merely quoted the Maulānā's statement [referring to the couplet] for the sake of blessings. If anyone did not develop complete affinity with my temperament, it is not of my doing, it is of the lovers. Close following, awareness and emulation are the ways to it. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. Once this affinity is realized, I will automatically have the urge to divulge my secrets if there are any or if any are created."

In short, if no one could fathom Hadrat Wālā's secrets completely, and even if he were to deliver thousands of lectures, he will not be able to express Hadrat Wālā's essential and fundamental status.

> Hadrat Wālā's station is beyond intelligence and understanding. If anyone learns anything, he would really learn nothing. If anyone understands anything, he would really understand nothing.

A milestone for those of sound understanding

Thus, despite my intense efforts and the lengthiness of this chapter, Hadrat Wālā's essential rank as regards spiritual instruction was not to be exposed, and therefore remained hidden. The following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* applies to me word for word:

> I melted my life so that the objective of the heart may be realized but this did not happen. I burnt myself in this hope but it did not materialize.

The following couplet written by myself applies to Hadrat Wālā:

> The secret was not exposed even when it was exposed. The point remained unexplained even when it was explained.

The following couplet of Hadrat Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* applies to both conditions:

> Neither is there any end to his beauty nor any limit to Saʿdī's words. The one who has the ailment of constant thirst dies a thirsty man while the ocean remains as it is.

Be that as it may, this collection will certainly present the gist of Hadrat Wālā's programme and system of spiritual instruction. People of sound understanding and affinity will – Allāh willing – be able to get a glimpse of Hadrat Wālā's fundamental and essential status in the field of spiritual instruction.

What was considered to be the destination turned out to be a dream

Another way in which Allāh *taʿālā* displayed Hadrat Wālā's position as a lighthouse of instruction and a centre of rectitude and guidance of this era is that because an erudite shaykh and spiritual master of his calibre cannot be seen in these times, every genuine seeker's gaze turns towards Hadrat Wālā. Consequently, most letters of the seekers contain the point that they do not see any erudite shaykh of Hadrat Wālā's calibre, this is why they cannot seem to feel settled with anyone else.

The fact of the matter is that through the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā very clearly explained all the essential points of the path and established Allāh's proof on the creation. The incorrect thoughts which the masses and the elite had about tasawwuf and the non-objectives which they considered to be the objectives were removed, and the original and genuine tasawwuf was displayed as clear as the light of day. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards and may He enable us to enjoy his company for a long time.

> May Allāh keep Majdhūb safe and sound. He awoke from his sleep and what he thought to be the destination turned out to be a dream.

I was actually thinking of Hadrat Wālā when I composed the above couplet and Majdhūb actually referred to him. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable Hadrat Wālā's blessings to increase by the day and to be continually showered for a long time on the Muslims. May He enable everyone to benefit from his blessings. Āmīn.

A compounded joy

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and all thanks to Him that as soon as I completed this chapter, the first five parts of *Ashraf as-Sawānih* volume one which is currently under print have been printed, and I received a sample copy of these five parts today. I was overjoyed by this beautiful coincidence. All praise is due to Allāh, I – the compiler of these pages – became a manifestation of the following couplet:

> I got the fragrance of the flower from one side and received a message from my beloved from the other side. I am that mad man who experienced spring from both sides.

A gift from the heart

In concluding this chapter on spiritual instruction, I present the following couplets of Hadrat Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* as a prayer for Hadrat Wālā:

> Listen O you parrot who exposes the secrets! May your beak never be devoid of gratitude.
>
> May you remain green. May you experience good fortune forever because you presented a good picture of the beloved.

I now quote the conclusion of the *Mathnawī Sharīf* of Hadrat Rūmī *rahimahullāh*. The conclusion was written by his son, Hadrat Maulānā Bahā' ad-Dīn *rahimahullāh*. These couplets apply totally to Hadrat Wālā.

> All thanks, this letter reached its destination. The postage amount was not less and it reached our brothers.

This speech elevates the skies. The one who passes through it reaches a high point.

Not the hilltop of the sky which is green, but to that high point which is higher than the skies.

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات...كتبه أحقر الزمن عزيز الحسن عفا عنه الله ذو المنن، وحفظه عن جميع الفتن، ما ظهر منها وما بطن.

لإحدى وعشرين من ذي القعدة (١٣٥٤ﻫ) يوم السبت، حال إقامته بالخانقاه الإمدادية الأشرفية بتهانه بهون.

KHULAFĀ

As per the practice of the spiritual masters, Hadrat Wālā confers permission for bay'ah and instruction in the path to some of his special associates after he establishes the presence of certain essential qualities in them. These qualities will be mentioned further on. The list of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' is given towards the end of volume three of this biography. Based on the fact that he is a Mujaddid and a Hakīm al-Ummah, he made certain improvements to this concept, as he did to other religious concepts.

1. A Formal Record Of The Names And Addresses Of Khulafā'

Whenever he confers khilāfah to any of his associates, he records their full name and address so that it may serve as a record and reminder for him. He then publishes these details from time to time in his *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* so that a non-khalīfah may not claim to be his khalīfah and is unable to deceive people in this regard. Some persons tried to deceive people who then made inquiries with Hadrat Wālā about such persons because he has a list of all his khulafā'. Hadrat Wālā emphatically wrote that such persons are liars. There is no other way of rejecting the claims of such a fabricator. Hadrat Wālā also explains the wisdom behind publishing the names of his khulafā'. He says: "In past times, there were neither so many liars nor anyone who would fabricate a lie on such a matter. There was therefore no need for precautions of this type. Now there is a need which is also supported by incidents in this regard. Another wisdom behind publishing their names is that seekers may come to know of them and derive benefit from them."

2. Publishing The Names Of Khulafā'

If Hadrat Wālā does not know some of the spiritual conditions of any khalīfah or hears doubtful things about his spiritual conditions, he removes the name of such a person from his list as a precaution. However, in order to save such a person from humiliation, he does not publish his name. All he does is exclude the person's name in the next list which is published. Only the names of those whose khilāfah is maintained is published. So this was his method of removal by his own

choice. As for those who have passed away, their names have to be removed out of necessity. The method of removing their names is as follows: As he gets information about those who have passed on, he records their names in his diary. Periodically he publishes their names in his *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat*, and then removes them and the previously mentioned ones from the total number. He writes: "The total number till now was such and such, after excluding such and such number, the total is now…"

He then adds the number of the new khulafā' to this total so that the number of present khulafā' can always be learnt easily.

I now present an example of how Hadrat Wālā used to remove a person from his list. He writes: "There are some khulafā' whose spiritual conditions I just cannot ascertain. I drew my attention to this in addendum seven, announcement number two. There are others whose spiritual conditions appear to be doubtful. As a precaution, I draw a separate list of khulafā'. Those who are not in it must not be considered to be my khulafā' at present. However, if anyone's condition is proven to be satisfactory in the future, his name will be re-entered."

Look! Hadrat Wālā did not expose the names of those who were removed so that they are not offended and humiliated. He only wrote the names of those who were maintained. He added one consideration: "When I say that the remaining ones must not be considered to be my khulafā' at present, I am not denying their capabilities, rather, I am not certain about their worthiness to be my khulafā'."

However, based on a severe demand, Hadrat Wālā acted against his general rule by writing to a certain person and informing him of the cancellation of his khilāfah and his bay'ah. He then published a copy of this letter in his *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat*. Together with this, based on his extreme concern to uphold the limits, he added a general announcement: "My only reason is to inform those who may revert to such a person solely on the basis of my accepting his bay'ah and conferring khilāfah to him. I am not addressing those who do not revert to him on this basis. Every person has full rights to make his own choice as regards Dīnī matters."

In short, Hadrat Wālā considers every matter within its limits. There are neither excesses nor shortcomings in any matter. It is most difficult to possess a just and equitable quality of this level and it is extremely rare.

> This good fortune is not acquired by physical means.
> It is solely a bestowal from the Giver [Allāh *taʿālā*].

3. Saving People From Excesses And Shortcomings As Regards Khulafā'

In his effort to save people from excesses and shortcomings as regards his khulafā', Hadrat Wālā wrote a very beneficial theme which was also printed in *an-Nūr*, dated Dhū al-Hijjah 1351 A.H. Hadrat Wālā explains the reality behind including or removing a person from his list of khulafā' so that there may be no excesses in having good thoughts about those whose names are included nor any bad thoughts about those whose names have been left out. Hadrat Wālā's article will first be quoted verbatim. It will then be explained according to need so that it may be easier to understand. This is because although it encompasses all objectives, it is extremely concise. If it is still not understood after my explanation, an erudite ʿālim should be consulted to explain it verbally. It is as follows:

Putting an end to evil thoughts and excessive good thoughts

"When I wilfully remove a person from this list it is due to the severance of information about him. The absence of knowledge about his suitability does not necessarily negate his suitability. When I include a person in this list, it is based on the overriding assumption that he possesses certain essential qualities, viz. firmly established piety, rectitude, conditional affinity with the path, the qualification to rectify others and an expectation that he will reach the level of perfection in the above-listed qualities. This is similar to the issuing of a certificate to a student who completes his studies."

I [the compiler] now provide an explanation to the above. It contains three parts.

The first part

> When I wilfully remove a person from this list it is due to the severance of information about him. The absence of knowledge about his suitability does not necessarily negate his suitability.

In this part Hadrat Wālā says: When I wilfully remove a person from the list of khulafā' (details in this regard were provided in point number two above) the reason for it is that I did not receive any information about him for a considerable period of time or received doubtful information about him (which is as good as not receiving any information because when it comes to khilāfah, only information which is convincing and satisfying is worthy of consideration. As for doubtful information, it is as good as no information at all). When the spiritual conditions of a person are not known or one hears doubtful conditions about him, satisfaction over his condition no longer remains. Thus, the reason for removing him from the list is that knowledge about his suitability is no longer present, and not that Hadrat Wālā has obtained knowledge about his unsuitability. In this part, Hadrat Wālā completely seals off any way of developing bad thoughts about those whose names have been struck off.

The second part

> When I include a person in this list, it is based on the overriding assumption that he possesses certain essential qualities, viz. firmly established piety, rectitude, conditional affinity with the path, the qualification to rectify others and an expectation that he will reach the level of perfection in the above-listed qualities.

In this part Hadrat Wālā expresses the qualities on whose basis khilāfah is conferred. They are:

1. The person must be pious.
2. He must have undertaken his own rectitude.
3. He must have developed affinity with this path. However, this affinity must not be mere rational affinity but conditional affinity [to do with one's spiritual condition].
4. He must have developed the ability to supervise the rectification of others.
5. He must have acquired firmness in the above qualities.
6. It must be expected of him that although he has firmness in the above qualities to the level of necessity, he will progress in the future and will acquire perfection in them.

Hadrat Wālā added the condition of “overwhelming assumption” to show that the realization of these qualities is assumed, it is not definitive nor can it be so.

In this part Hadrat Wālā also seals off the possibility of excessive good thoughts about those who have been conferred with khilāfah. This was expressed in the title “Putting an end to excessive good thoughts”. Furthermore, by adding the condition of “overwhelming assumption” Hadrat Wālā set a complete seal on all those doubts which could be experienced by the one conferring the khilāfah against any of the khulafā’ who has not reached perfection at present or – Allāh forbid – whose condition changes in the future.

The third part

> This is similar to the issuing of a certificate to a student who completes his studies.

In this part Hadrat Wālā clarifies the second part with an example. It is a very clear example which is unconditionally accepted by even the scholars who are concerned with the external self. Hadrat Wālā says that it [conferring of khilāfah] is exactly like the issuing of a certificate to a student who has completed his studies. The issuing of a certificate to him does not mean that he has acquired perfection and mastery in those sciences. Rather, it is issued on the sole overwhelming assumption that he has developed a certain level of affinity with those sciences whereby, if he continues studying them, there is a strong hope that he will gradually reach the level of perfection. If he, due to his negligence and ingratitude, wastes away his affinity and capability, no accusation whatsoever can be levelled on the one who issued the certificate. Rather, it is the student’s own fault.

In the same way, when khilāfah is conferred to a person, it does not mean that he has reached a level of perfection in those qualities right now. Rather, khilāfah is conferred on that overwhelming assumption that he certainly has acquired an essential level of those qualities, and if he continues trying and endeavouring to perfect them, then there is a strong hope that he will gradually and eventually reach a level of perfection in them.

By the grace of Allāh *ta‘ālā*, I [the compiler] have now completed my explanation of Hadrat Wālā’s article. The reader

must have observed how Hadrat Wālā conveyed so many unique themes in this one concise and meaningful statement. Glory to Allāh! Look at his eloquence, style, finesse and conciseness. Look at his factualism and the power of his pen!

4. Khulafā' Who Instruct Through Companionship

Another peculiarity of Hadrat Wālā is that just recently in addition to having khulafā'-e-bayʿah, he appointed khulafā'-e-suhbah. We quote a portion of Hadrat Wālā's article on this subject as published in *an-Nūr* dated Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1354 A.H.

"First addendum with regard to khulafā': About ten months ago a thought suddenly came into my heart that I have certain associates (who are quite able to instruct others but do not fulfil all the prerequisites of inducting others as murīds. I am still waiting for them to experience certain special spiritual conditions). I felt I should permit them to instruct others without accepting bayʿah from them. Subsequently, the following were given this permission. I decided to give such persons the title of "Mujāz Suhbah". In other words, those who have been given permission to convey benefit to others solely through companionship. In order to differentiate them from the others, I gave the first group the title of "Mujāz Bayʿah". If the anticipated spiritual conditions appear in those who are Mujāz Suhbah (the identification of which I alone have the prerogative. If they await it, it will certainly negate sincerity), I will include them among the Mujāz Bayʿah and publish their names in that list. I now present a separate list of those who are Mujāz Suhbah. The two lists will remain separate in future as well." (the list is then presented).

Glory to Allāh! Many intricate wisdoms are considered in this decision – both for those who have been conferred this title and also those who are to benefit from them. For example, since these Mujāzīn (plural of Mujāz) have developed sufficient capability in teaching and instructing, why should people not be given an opportunity to benefit from them? Why should people be deprived when they can benefit according to the extent of the Mujāz Suhbah's present spiritual condition? At the same time, the Mujāzīn have not been left to neglect their own rectification and perfection. Instead, they have been informed that the development of certain special qualities within them is awaited. In this way, they will not feel smug by

the permission which has been granted to them. Rather, they will try even harder to reach the level of perfection and remain occupied in striving to this end. Consequently, I myself saw several of these Mujāz Suhbah striving even harder for their own rectification and perfection.

Hadrat Wālā himself said: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* my feeling that conferring permission of this nature will be very beneficial for the beneficiaries themselves proved to be most correct. There was probably not a single one from them who did not burst out crying when he was informed of this permission. And when he thought about his own unworthiness, he began striving toward his own rectification. I gauged this from their subsequent letters."

I recall a statement of Hadrat Wālā in this regard: "Some levels of rectification are dependent on the person being conferred with khilāfah."

In the above-quoted article of Hadrat Wālā, he made reference to an intricate consideration, viz. the specification of the awaited spiritual conditions and the decision that they have appeared will be made solely by him and he alone will enjoy this prerogative. Those who have been appointed as Mujāz Suhbah have nothing to do with it. The wisdom behind this is that they will remain concerned about their rectification in every way possible. Had the spiritual conditions been specified to them from before hand, they would have confined themselves to endeavouring to acquire them only and would have disregarded paying attention to other matters.

Furthermore, if the Mujāzīn felt that those conditions have appeared – according to them – they would wait expectantly for the conferring of Mujāz Bayʿah on them; and this totally negates sincerity. Hadrat Wālā wants people to benefit from them while they themselves are aware of their shortcomings [without specifying what they are], and they continue in their efforts of self-rectification and remain occupied in efforts towards perfection. At the same time, their intentions in these efforts must be correct, viz. their objective must be perfection of their spiritual condition, not the acquisition of the title of Mujāz Bayʿah.

Hadrat Wālā did appoint some of these Mujāz Suhbah to Mujāz Bayʿah after he identified certain special spiritual conditions

which he had been awaiting and, in this way, all the prerequisites of a Mujāz Bayʿah were found in them.

5. The Manner Of Conferring Khilāfah

When Hadrat Wālā decides on appointing a person as his khalīfah, he informs him via a letter. He also instructs the person to inform some of his special friends. The purpose of this is so that others may come to know of it and people may be able to benefit from him. In most cases, Hadrat Wālā would inform the person as follows: "The idea came into my heart spontaneously that I should give you permission for bayʿah and instruction. I therefore confer it to you after placing my trust in Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* perfect and popularize your benefit. If anyone wishes to revert to you, you must not refuse."

6. Khilāfah Is Conferred After Assurance And Confidence

Hadrat Wālā does not confer khilāfah merely as a coincidence. Rather, he only confers it when he thinks of it after observing a person's conditions. Once he thinks of it, he observes the person's conditions very carefully and scrutinizes them. In fact, he even notes the names of some people so that it would serve as a reminder for him to observe and scrutinize them. Once he experiences external assurance and spiritual confidence in the person, he confers khilāfah to him.

The failure of some people who resort to ruses in order to obtain khilāfah

Some people resorted to ruses in order to obtain khilāfah but they could not succeed. One person wrote to him: "The practice in this area is that when a person is about to leave this world, people urge him to repent. The people here are insisting that I should take up this task of urging the dying person. If Hadrat permits, I will do this." Hadrat Wālā replied: "You must do it verbally only; there is no need for repentance to be carried out by placing their hand in your hand. A verbal repentance is sufficient."

Hadrat Wālā then addressed us saying: "The man failed in realizing his objective because the masses consider bayʿah to be bayʿah only when it is done by placing one's hand in the hand of another. If anyone urges a person to repent verbally, they do not consider it to be bayʿah. I prohibited the man because if I had granted him permission, he would have considered himself to be a shaykh and in addition to this

special occasion [at the time of a person's death], he would gradually start inducting murīds."

Similarly, a reliable narrator related to me that some persons copied the spiritual conditions of other seekers from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* – conditions on the basis of which those seekers were conferred with khilāfah – and sent them to Hadrat Wālā as if they were their own conditions. They did this in the hope of receiving khilāfah from Hadrat Wālā. However, as per Hadrat Wālā's statement: "If a person never consumed alcohol and now tries to act like a drunk man to show that he is intoxicated, then a regular drunkard will immediately recognize him as a fraud because a genuinely drunk state is completely different from a fabricated one", so such persons also failed in their objective.

A reply to a seeker's letter

Similarly, *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* contains the letter of a seeker who had been residing in the Khānqāh. In the letter, he quoted a few texts from *at-Takashshuf* (a book written by Hadrat Wālā). The crux of the texts which he quoted was that a seeker should not separate himself from his shaykh before reaching a level of perfection unless there is a severe need for him to depart. However, once he starts to experience spiritual blessings directly and the murīd reaches a level of perfection, there is no harm in leaving the shaykh's company at such a time. However, this applies to the person who no longer needs tutoring, he is merely occupied in strengthening his affinity. If this is not the case, he cannot progress without physical closeness with the shaykh.

After quoting these texts, the seeker said: "It has been five years since I left home. My father and grandfather have written many letters insisting on me to return home quickly. After studying all these texts [quoted above], I am very concerned about what I should do. I request Hadrat Wālā's advice."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "Quoting texts from my book stems from illnesses of the self in the hope that I will say that there is no longer any need for physical closeness. It also displays a sort of claim to perfection. Do you think these principles are not considered by myself? It would have been enough for you to describe your conditions and ask for my advice. This is one of the most intricate plots of the self."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the intricate plot of the self which Hadrat Wālā identified. Personalities of this calibre are known as spies of the hearts.

A reply to an ʿālim

An ʿālim wrote a lengthy letter in which he described the need to receive permission to induct murīds from our own elders so that he could fight against the bidʿatīs. If he does not have too much of courage to fight them, he could at least stop the people from innovations so that he could succeed against the bidʿatī shaykhs. Hadrat Wālā replied: "You self is very intelligent. Although I am not an intelligent person, I can recognize intelligent people. A mere reference suffices an intelligent person."

In short, Hadrat Wālā confers khilāfah after strict observation and scrutiny, and after a lot of thinking and pondering.

7. Learning And Obedience – The Fundamentals Of Khilāfah

Hadrat Wālā does not make a precondition of bayʿah before conferring khilāfah. We had related the incident of a person previously who resided in the Khānqāh and – as per Hadrat Wālā's practice most of the time – did not accept his bayʿah in the beginning. The man continued living in the Khānqāh and continued benefiting from Hadrat Wālā's teachings. When he was about to depart after quite some time, Hadrat Wālā gave him permission to accept bayʿah from others because he felt that the man was worthy of khilāfah. The man said: "Hadrat Wālā did not accept my own bayʿah as yet." Hadrat Wālā said: "There is still no need to accept bayʿah from you because the reality and objective of bayʿah have already been achieved. However, if you want, there is no harm in accepting your bayʿah now. In fact, there is hope for blessings in it." Thus, we see Hadrat Wālā appointing the man as a Mujāz Bayʿah first and accepting bayʿah from him after that. After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā says: "I want to demonstrate practically that deriving benefit is not dependent on bayʿah. Rather it is dependent on learning and obedience – these are the fundamentals."

8. Non-'Ulamā' Who Are Worthy Of Khilāfah

Another peculiarity of Hadrat Wālā is the granting of permission to non-ʿālims who are worthy of khilāfah. They are

given permission only to work on the masses because it is far-fetched to expect ʿulamā' to have confidence in such khulafā'. In order to make this known, in his list of khulafā', Hadrat Wālā has "for the masses" written in brackets after the names of such khulafā'. However, there are a few non-ʿālims about whom it is expected that – due to their sound understanding – they will be able to inspire ʿulamā' and the latter too will not hesitate in reverting to them. Such khulafā' are given general permission and the words "for the masses" are not written after their names.

9. Arrangements For Khulafā' To Develop Expertise In Rectification

If Hadrat Wālā does not expect to develop affinity with a seeker from the beginning or a seeker merely wants to pledge bayʿah without following his programme of training, then in most cases he hands over such seekers to his own khulafā'. Apart from the many other benefits of this, a major benefit is that his khulafā' develop proficiency in rectification. There are several individuals of this nature who – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – are conveying immense benefits to the Muslims. So much so, through the blessings of their programme of training and instruction, several seekers reached a level of perfection and were conferred khilāfah by them [the khulafā' of Hadrat Wālā].

When a seeker's condition is complicated, the khulafā' consult Hadrat Wālā. Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā continually gets an opportunity to check the letters of the seekers whom he had handed over to his khulafā' and to see what replies his khulafā' wrote. He even expresses his approval to some of them and says with regard to them: "By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, they are of more benefit than many spiritual masters of our time." In the same vein, if he came to know that a certain khalīfah was becoming lax or delaying in answering to letters, Hadrat Wālā would stop handing over seekers to him.

Hadrat Wālā constantly emphasizes on them to train and tutor the seekers with special attention and affection. He also complains to them when they become inattentive in this regard.

In short, the khulafā' are benefiting from Hadrat Wālā's programme just as intern doctors receive practical training from their seniors in clinics and hospitals. Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā wants to convince them that the spiritual lineage

has to continue. He expressed his happiness several times by saying: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I now have such associates who have understood the path very well and there is hope that – Allāh willing – the proliferation of the path will continue through them."

As mentioned in detail previously, Hadrat Wālā also says: "I desire all the Dīnī work which is currently entrusted to me to continue after me. I do not want anyone to express remorse in my absence and say: 'Now who is going to do this work?' It is also for this reason that I periodically delegate my various Dīnī services to others."

Hadrat Wālā's statement about interaction between a shaykh and his khulafā'

Finally, I present Hadrat Wālā's statement about how a khalīfah should interact with his shaykh after being conferred with khilāfah. He said: "Although a seeker does not need to be tutored by his shaykh after completion, it is essential for him to maintain a relationship of faith and gratitude for the rest of his life so that he may continue receiving blessings from him."

Hadrat Wālā's self-obliteration before his shaykh

Consequently, we see Hadrat Wālā always singing the praise of his shaykh to this day and ascribing all his knowledge and sciences to his service of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. The fact of the matter is that you would rarely come across a person who obliterated himself before his shaykh as Hadrat Wālā does. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this is the reason why so much of benefit is derived from him.

A person cannot be independent of his shaykh

Once a person completes his training, he must not consider himself to be independent of his shaykh. Although it is not essential to continue the programme of benefiting from the shaykh after becoming his khalīfah, it is still needed for progress in one's rank. In fact, in most situations the programme of benefiting from him remains on the level of necessity. This was learnt in detail under point number three. Even after being conferred with khilāfah, a person has not necessarily reached a level of perfection. Therefore, under no condition can one be independent of a shaykh who is alive. Consequently, we see all Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' continually benefiting from him and taking directives from him. This

benefits them tremendously. In fact, after experiencing it, they find they have a severe need for it. I know of many testimonies in this regard. As for those who considered themselves to be independent, their condition certainly changed [for the worse].

Hadrat Wālā goes to the extent of saying: "If a person does not have a senior overlooking him, then for his own wellbeing, he must consider his juniors to be his seniors, interact with them, and also take their advice on Dīnī matters when there is a need." Hadrat Wālā himself practises on this.

A picture of Hadrat Wālā's Khānqāh

From the above points the reader must have gauged how pure and sensible Hadrat Wālā's principles are on the issue of khilāfah. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā had many senior personalities, people of lofty spiritual ranks and conditions, scholars, and people of rectitude and piety as his khulafā'. And he still has such personalities. Due to their full occupation in dhikr by day and night, the following couplet of Hadrat Amīr Khusro *rahimahullāh* applies to them:

> I remain lying near your house every night. I beseech and cry to you every day.

I myself had the opportunity of observing this on many occasions. This is especially so in the month of Ramadān when many of those engaged in dhikr – including many khulafā' – are present in the Khānqāh. The following couplets compiled by myself apply to them:

> The drink-provider is one while the drinkers are many. They are all observed by his two intoxicated eyes.
>
> The house of love is experiencing a spring and splendour. Every drinker is in ecstasy.
>
> Look how wonderful these people are who are taking the drink of the love of Allāh *taʿālā*. How lovely this drunkenness and grand status of Allāh *taʿālā* is!
>
> Do not even ask about those who engage in Allāh's dhikr in the middle of the night. They are occupied with their hearts and tongues.
>
> What are you asking about the pain at dawn? This morsel is better than fish and chicken.

> Although the room is small, it is filled with dhikr. How beautiful this singing is although it is not accompanied by drums and fiddles.
>
> In this place, the heart repeats the name of Allāh all the time because this is what it hears all the time.
>
> The atmosphere here is so healthy! The heart is cured without any medication.
>
> O master! Look at the rank of our Ashraf! Come to the Khānqāh of our Ashraf.
>
> Come, cast aside your pride and arrogance. How can I describe the effulgence here which is worthy of observation!?
>
> The tongue cannot fully explain the blessings of this place because it is in a shore-less ocean.
>
> Come so that you may personally see what you heard. Hearsay can never equal an eyewitness account.
>
> I am speaking nothing but the truth because this is a matter of Dīn. Believe me because these are all eyewitness accounts.
>
> Majdhūb is not saying all this from hearsay because whatever a Qalandar says, he says it after witnessing it.

The above couplets portray a true and genuine picture of Hadrat Wālā's Khānqāh. Furthermore, I personally witnessed how all types of seekers – the novices, the average ones and the masters – were benefiting according to their capabilities. I also said the following lines in this regard:

> Spring is here. The joys are here. The large jars, bowls and goblets are being filled.
>
> Everyone is satisfying his desires in your assembly. The seekers are bursting forth, Majdhūb is jumping up.

I also said the following couplets with reference to Khānqāh Ashrafī:

By night and day there is a throng of those seeking the pain of the heart. Is this Khānqāh Ashrafī or is it a shop where the pain of the heart is obtained!?

It is Khānqāh Ashrafī, not a place for the pain of the heart. Every particle here is a world for the pain of the heart.

However, this pain of the heart is a cure for all other pains. As I said:

The pain of the heart cured all other pains. The difficulty of love made every other difficulty easy.

This is why the relaxing life which one experiences at Khānqāh Ashrafī is probably not experienced anywhere else.

The blessings of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā'

I now return to my original topic. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' are to be found in almost all levels of society and in almost every region of India. In fact, some of his khulafā' are also to be found in other countries. Apart from the many khulafā' who have passed away, the surviving khulafā' coincidentally number 74 – Hadrat Wālā's age at present. By the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, some of them are very active in the field of spiritual instruction and rectification of seekers. The Muslims are reforming tremendously through them and the servants of Allāh *taʿālā* are benefiting a lot. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, these khulafā' also enjoy acceptance.

The rank of Hadrat Wālā's associates

The above was said about those who were conferred with khilāfah. On one occasion Hadrat Wālā said with regard to his special programme of rectification and Sharʿī accountability: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am satisfied with the majority of my associates. Had I been over-accommodating, every type of people would have come and filled this place and caused confusion. All praise is due to Allāh, as regards understanding of Dīn and showing due importance to it, almost all my associates are worthy of khilāfah. However, since some amount of respectability is also needed for khilāfah, I am hesitant in conferring it to the others." Hadrat Wālā also expressed the same thoughts with regard to certain educated and superficially educated attendants by mentioning them

specifically. It is true, most of Hadrat Wālā's associates are of such a level by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*.

The story of a builder

When a completely illiterate builder of Fatahpūr pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā, he became concerned about the speed with which work was done under contract and the one which was done under an owner's supervision. A wise, learned and righteous person who had not even pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā said to me during my stay in Fatahpūr – which was quite some time ago – with regard to this builder: "We certainly witnessed the effects of Hadrat Maulānā. Anyone who became connected to him would attach full importance to practising on the Sharīʿah. He would worry about what was lawful and what was not in whatever he did."

The story of a barber

Similarly, a person related to me about a barber in Allāhābād. After pledging bayʿah to Hadrat Wālā, the barber gave up his profession solely because he had to shave the beards of most Muslims who came to him. Instead of cutting people's hair, he now earns a living as a cook who cooks for people for various occasions. He is earning much more than what he was earning previously as a barber. He always receives the best foods from the meals which he cooks. He is looked up with respect because of his cleverness, religiosity and honesty.

The story of a student

There was a student in a musjid studying under the musjid lamp. When it was the time to put off the musjid lamps, he put off the lamp immediately, lit his own lamp and continued studying. When a Maulānā who was a teacher in that place saw this, he said to those who were around him: "This student seems to be an associate of Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī." After making inquiries, he learnt that the student was in fact a disciple of Hadrat Wālā.

The story of an attendant

Similarly, one of Hadrat Wālā's attendants happened to stay over with a certain person in the Dār al-ʿUlūm at Deoband. When a lantern was brought, the attendant inquired as to whether it belonged to the Dār al-ʿUlūm. Even on this occasion,

a very old man who had met many elders and remained in their company asked: “Do you have a bond with Maulānā Thānwī?”

Every associate is a worthy jewel in his place

In short, by the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* most associates of Hadrat Wālā are worthy of khilāfah by virtue of their understanding of Dīn and adherence to piety. Others are rectified and reformed just by looking at them. In fact, as per Hadrat Wālā's statement: “There are many seekers who undertake their rectification through correspondence. When they come here and I meet some of them for the first time, I feel that they are eligible for khilāfah. However, I hold back for some time as a precaution.”

These incidents and conditions show how clearly all-encompassing and perfect Hadrat Wālā's blessings are. Hadrat Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> If the river which flows through the sugar-cane farm were to dry up, the sugar-cane would not be able to supply sugar to the world.

The following couplet applies to the all-encompassing and perfect nature of Hadrat Wālā's blessings:

> The entire world is intoxicated by your beauty without having drunk anything. May the evil eye not catch you. You made us drink a unique drink for free.

I compiled the following couplets with reference to Hadrat Wālā's rank:

> The pain which is within him came out in such a way that his breathing caused the entire world to be ignited.
>
> Thousands of people have taken a light from him and are walking around with it in their hands. A single lamp lit countless lamps.
>
> May his heart remain alive forever by virtue of love. May his blessings continue reaching the world forever.

ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ. اَللّٰهُمَّ زِدْ فَزِدْ.

PRACTICES

Most of Hadrat Wālā's practices on various matters were described in detail under the chapter "Spiritual Instruction". Certain specific practices were also mentioned in various other chapters whenever the occasion demanded. His practices related to journeys and lectures were specifically related in the chapters on journeys and sound admonition. There is no need to repeat them. Furthermore, some books on this topic have already been published, e.g. *Maʿmūlāt Ashrafīyyah, Ashraf al-Maʿmūlāt, Maʿmūlāt Khānqāh*. I therefore do not have much to write in this chapter – there is neither a need for it nor do I have the time. However, I will relate certain special practices as they come to my mind.

Entering His House

Whenever Hadrat Wālā goes to his houses, he first knocks on the door and then calls for someone by name. He continues waiting outside until he is called from inside. If a child calls him in, he does not consider it sufficient. He does not enter the house until an adult calls him in. Since he does not like to cause the slightest inconvenience to anyone, if he perceives that the womenfolk are hastening to go into purdah, he calls out with genuine kindness: "There is no need to rush. You may go into purdah at ease, I am waiting."

If he goes to the house of someone else and purdah has already been observed, he still asks the owner of the house to go and check again. He does this because sometimes girls feel that there is still time before he can enter the house, so they remove the purdah in order to fulfil a short errand. Hadrat Wālā will only go in when he is absolutely certain. Even then, he asks the owner of the house to go in first.

Consideration For The Ease of Others In Every Task

On one occasion, Hadrat Wālā wrote replies to the letters of those who were residing in the Khānqāh and gave them to me after the fajr salāh to place them on the pulpit of the masjid so that those who had written the letters could take the replies from there. When handing the letters to me, he said: "Do not keep them stacked one on top of the other. Rather, place them separately so that the seekers will merely glance at them and

each one will identify his letter easily. In this way he will not be inconvenienced into having to look for them."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the consideration for the ease of others.

Abstaining From Carelessness In Every Matter

A man came for a taʿwīdh for the wife of one of his relatives so Hadrat Wālā refused. He said: "Why did her husband not come personally?" Hadrat Wālā then said to those who were present: "This is how unlawful relationships develop. Women are soft-hearted and are impressed by services of this nature. If any woman asks for a taʿwīdh via a non-mahram, I refuse."

Glory to Allāh! Look at his caution.

Intercession

Generally Hadrat Wālā does not intercede in favour of anyone because it constrains the addressee in most cases. If he happens to write a note of intercession for certain special associates, he gives the addressee full freedom in the matter by adding [for example]: "Provided you are not constrained in any way, it is not against any wisdom, no person's right is trampled, and it can be done without any difficulty." The essence of all these provisions is that the person must not feel constrained in any way.

Some people imposed on Hadrat Wālā to write a letter of intercession while he – out of his respectability – could not refuse. Hadrat Wālā wrote whatever they requested and gave it to them. He then wrote a separate letter to the person and sent it by post to him. He wrote therein: "I was compelled into writing a letter of intercession. Do not feel imposed by it in any way. Instead, do what you would have done without the letter of intercession." In order to satisfy himself further, Hadrat Wālā would request the addressee to send a letter confirming that he received the letter.

Hadrat Wālā says: "It is desirable to intercede in favour of people but it is obligatory to save others from harm or inconvenience. This is why I do this."

Some people wanted Hadrat Wālā to write letters of intercession to certain wealthy people requesting monetary help from them. Hadrat Wālā replied frankly: "Some of my own

relatives are more needy than you. Even if I had to beg, they would have been more deserving than you."

Hadrat Wālā also says with regard to intercession: "People are impressed by it and are unaware of its limits. The informality and simplicity of past times no longer exist. Extreme precaution is therefore essential in this regard."

He also says: "Some people obtained letters of intercession from me and stayed over for several months at the house of the person to whom the letter was written in the hope of receiving employment from the person. These shameless people lived with the person and had all their meals with him, while the poor fellow accommodated them solely because of his contact with me. Experiences of this nature caused me to become even more wary about writing intercessions."

There were some special needy people for whom Hadrat Wālā did not write a special intercession but one in general terms. There were yet others to whom Hadrat Wālā gave large sums of money and made a note of this in the letter of intercession. In this way, huge debts of some of these people were settled by virtue of the general nature of Hadrat Wālā's letter. There were others who took unlawful benefit from Hadrat Wālā's letter. They went around collecting money even after their debts were fulfilled. When Hadrat Wālā was informed of this, he summoned such people and compelled them to tear the letter in his presence. Hadrat Wālā is now very cautious about writing general letters of intercession of this nature.

Abstaining From Giving Opinions On Lawful Matters

Hadrat Wālā generally abstains from giving his opinions on lawful matters. He says: "You may consult experienced people in this regard. I will make du'ā'."

He also says: "Nowadays, people consider the person who gives an opinion to be responsible for the outcome. If the outcome is against their wishes, they accuse the one who gave his opinion. Whereas the reality of giving an opinion or a counsel is to help the person to come to a decision and to make it easy for him. The person must make the decision by himself.

Opinions Of Associates As Regards Illness

Hadrat Wālā does not consume any medicine suggested by anyone without first consulting his doctor. In fact, if he is under the treatment of a certain doctor and another doctor makes out a prescription for him, he clearly says to him: "I will show this prescription to my doctor and take this medicine after obtaining his permission."

If Hadrat Wālā's associates offer their different suggestions on what medication to take, as is the habit of people, he says to them: "Tell it to my doctor. If he permits, I will take the medication which you are suggesting."

In short, he neither offends anyone nor practises against the principles. Hadrat Wālā is so particular about following the instructions of his doctor that he will inquire about the smallest of ingredients in the foods to ensure that he is not consuming something which he was supposed to abstain from. No matter how much he feels like eating a certain food, he will not eat it without obtaining permission from his doctor first.

A well-wisher wanted to appoint a paid-doctor from his side. A relative of Hadrat Wālā who resides in Thānah Bhawan and is a doctor himself wanted to be appointed. Hadrat Wālā clearly said to him: "I cannot do anything as long as an expert in the field does not take your examination and affirms your affinity in this field because it is not permissible for a non-expert to treat people. Subsequently, Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib penned certain questions and sent them to Hadrat Wālā who in turn instructed the relative to write down the answers in his presence.

Salāh With Congregation

If Hadrat Wālā was delayed at any time in coming to the masjid for whatever reason, he would insist on someone else leading the people in salāh. In the meantime, he would perform his ablution and other necessities and join the congregation. He laid down a general principle that they should not wait more than fifteen minutes for the commencement of the congregation for salāhs for which there is a lot of time and they should not wait so long for the other salāhs. This was laid down so that the other worshippers are not inconvenienced.

Abstaining From Unnecessary Inconvenience

A sick person is residing in the Khānqāh. Acting on his request, Hadrat Wālā instructed for water to be placed on the pulpit before the fajr salāh for the sake of reading and blowing over it. The person continue this practice and Hadrat Wālā continued reading and blowing over it for quite some time. When Hadrat Wālā noticed that he was making it into a business, he sent a very lenient message to him: "I assumed that your stay here will not be very long, this is why I had stipulated this system. If you are going to depart within the next few days, well and good. If not, I will read and blow over a bottle of water and you can continue mixing and filling it, and drink from it. There is no need to blow over it daily."

Hadrat Wālā bears a lot of inconvenience for others, but never puts himself into unnecessary difficulty.

Abstaining From Storing Unnecessary Items

Hadrat Wālā takes stock of his possessions periodically. Items which are unnecessary are removed from his ownership. He says in this regard: "I am terrified at keeping any item which is more than necessary. It weighs heavily on my heart just to think that I own useless items even if it does not cause me any inconvenience to retain them."

He says: "There are certain items which are used automatically. There are others which I have to ponder over and think for which purpose I can use them. If I come across such items, I give them to my wives if they require them. if not, I sell them. I think Maulānā Shabbīr Ahmad Sāhib used to say that when Hadrat Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* received gifts which were over and above his needs, he used to sell them. The Maulānā must have come across this in some book. I was overjoyed when I found support for my own practice."

In the same way, Hadrat Wālā does not store books in his ownership except for a few very special books. Quite some time ago he gave away many of his books to his relatives who are 'ulamā'. Many others he sends to Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and Sahāranpūr as endowments. In short, Hadrat Wālā has a natural aversion for unnecessary items and always keeps his heart empty for Allāh's remembrance.

Abstaining From Wastage

Hadrat Wālā values Allāh's bounties so much that he does not allow the smallest of items to go to waste. For example, used envelopes are turned over and kept aside. Residents of the Khānqāh are permitted to use them when writing to him about their spiritual conditions. Some children insist on him to give him these envelopes to play with. Hadrat Wālā gives them a few.

Some people collected many envelopes in this way. Consequently, when I saw a considerable number of such envelopes with my son, I returned them to Hadrat Wālā who was extremely cautious and said: "If he asked me and took those envelops, they are under his ownership." I do not recall whether they were returned to my son or Hadrat Wālā said that he should be given a few paisa with which he could buy whatever he likes. Nevertheless, both points were mentioned.

While on the topic of reusing envelopes, I recall that when the issue of stocks of envelopes and paper for government offices was discussed, Hadrat Wālā's brother, Munshī Akbar ʿAlī Sāhib who was a court manager at the time, presented to an English Collector who was his senior an old envelope which he turned over just as is done by Hadrat Wālā. The Englishman wrote in praise of it stating that his manager innovated an excellent way of saving on envelopes and that this method should be adopted. Hadrat Wālā said in this regard: "Some of our Muslim brothers make objections against our practice by saying that it stems from miserliness. However, look at how an Englishman appreciated it. See how white-skinned people who nowadays are emulated in all matters affirmed our practice by stating that it is not miserliness but an excellent arrangement and self-sufficiency."

Anyway, Hadrat Wālā reuses envelopes as described above and stores other bits of paper in a box. When anyone asks for these bits, he gives to them. They in turn soften them in water and make small utensils and other items, or use them in other permissible ways. Instead of throwing the thick paper with which parcels are wrapped, Hadrat Wālā keeps them aside to be used for writing taʿwīdh. If there are large sizes of such paper, he uses it for the same purpose, i.e. for wrapping parcels. In the same way, strings, pins, nails, tin boxes, bottles, baskets, etc. which normally come with parcels are kept safely.

People normally consider these items to be useless and throw them away.

As a result of this excellent arrangement, Hadrat Wālā does not have to go around searching when he needs such items. In most cases, they are found where they were stored. He does not have to purchase them nor does he have to wait for their arrival which would waste his time. Apart from the above items, other essentials such as a knife, scissors, needle, cotton, a glue-pot and other necessary utensils are kept nearby in his Khānqāh so that he does not have to send anyone to his house when he needs these items. When Hadrat Wālā finds items which he needs from his storage place, he says: "I keep a small amount of household items here [in the Khānqāh] so that I do not have to depend on obtaining them from my houses."

Note: Glory to Allāh! Hadrat Wālā's practice is supported by the following Hadīth of *Shamā'il Tirmidhī*:

كَانَ لَهُ عَتَادٌ فِيْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam had the material for every [essential] matter.

A Place For Everything

Hadrat Wālā places every item in its place in the most proper manner. Once he has finished using an item, he will get up immediately and return it to its original place. He does not defer carrying out a task to a later time. This is a principle which – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – keeps Hadrat Wālā's heart free all the time and does not cause him any confusion in carrying out other tasks. He may have to bear some inconvenience at the time when he gets up immediately to replace an item in its place, but it keeps his mind completely at rest after that. Even in his houses, Hadrat Wālā ensures he returns an item from where he took it so that the person who placed it there does not have to go around searching for it. Similarly, when he receives money orders or cash amounts for the various purposes [e.g. zakāh, lillāh, money for the Khānqāh, money for students, etc.] he places them immediately in the various bags which are set aside for the various purposes. He also notes necessary details about every amount so that it would serve as a reminder for him.

Caution In Replying To Questions

The following practice of Hadrat Wālā is also based on absolute wisdom and far-sightedness, viz. he does not reply to several parts of a question. Instead, he makes necessary inquiries until he identifies the main aspect of the question. He then gives an answer to that particular aspect. If he were not cautious in this regard, people would err in applying the answer or resort to that aspect of the question which supports their claims.

Caution In Writing Forewords To Books

Hadrat Wālā does not write a foreword or evaluation to a book merely after looking at a book superficially because he considers this to be impermissible. If he does not get the time to read a book in detail – which happens quite often – he concentrates on a particular portion of the book, reads it in detail and writes an evaluation on that portion. If he is satisfied with what he read, he mentions it in his evaluation and also adds: "Hopefully the rest of the book will be the same." Before he had experience in this regard, he did occasionally act against this practice, but later when he came to know of certain errors in a book, he expressed extreme regret and published an announcement of his retraction.

Returning Borrowed Items Immediately

If an item or food is sent in a person's utensil or wrapped in his cloth, Hadrat Wālā is extremely particular about sending it back immediately after emptying the item.

Practice In Sending Replies To Letters

If Hadrat Wālā receives several letters from several people from a single place, he makes it a point to post all the replies at the same time so that some letters do not reach before others, the recipients do not get an opportunity to boast against each other [which is possible if they do not receive them on the same day] and no one's feelings are hurt.

If he receives several letters from several people from a single place but written by the same person, then he is not really impressed by this. Instead, he makes inquiries in this regard. Just recently he received six letters from the same place in the same post. He asked the following question in each of those six

letters: “Today I received six letters from the same place. Did someone encourage you to write or was it a mutual plot?”

Those Who Came From Distant Places

During the days when Hadrat Wālā used to undertake journeys he made it a practice to note the names of those who had informed him of their intention to come to Thānā Bhawan. He noted their names and the dates on which they were expected in his diary. He did this so that he would not go on a journey on those dates. He had also issued a general prohibition for anyone to come without informing him first.

Concern For The Purity And Cleanliness Of Utensils

After using bowls, tumblers and other utensils, Hadrat Wālā would turn them upside down so that lizards, rats, etc. do not walk over them and they are preserved from getting dirty.

Non-Mahram Women Are Prohibited From Staying Over

Hadrat Wālā does not permit non-mahram women guests from staying over in his houses. They must stay elsewhere and come to him to present their needs. However, if he has a close bond with their men-folk and the latter permit, he allows them.

Associates Are Free To Continue Relationships

If Hadrat Wālā is displeased with a person, he does not approve of his associates also changing their attitude to the person. In fact, he issues strict prohibitions in this regard. If a person himself does not wish to continue a special bond with the person due to some strong reason, Hadrat Wālā does not impose on him.

Adherence To Principles And Rules

Hadrat Wālā says: “Adherence to essential rules and genuine principles is so necessary that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself adhered strictly to them. On one occasion Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* went out three miles from Madīnah to Qubā’ to meet a Sahābī. Based on the rule of seeking permission, he called for the person three times, offered salām to him and sought permission to enter. When he neither received a response to his salām from inside nor anyone came outside to meet him, he returned. He had walked a short distance when the Sahābī ran behind him and caught

up with him. The man was not aware of the rule of seeking permission as yet, this is why he wittingly did not reply to Rasūlullāh's salām. He felt that the more he receives the salām from the blessed mouth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* the more better it will be for him, after all, salām is a supplication for the person.

This is the excuse which he offered to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and took him back to his house. Now look at how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself adhered to rules and regulations. He walked for three miles and was prepared to go back three miles, but was not prepared to act against the rules. He was neither offended nor did he complain."

Caution In Replying To Disputes

Hadrat Wālā's practice is replying to questions with regard to disputes is to write the reply in a manner which cannot be used by either party as a proof for itself. He receives many questions of this nature. One such question was received just today and is quoted here as an example together with Hadrat Wālā's reply:

Question: The Ahl al-Hadīth consider themselves to be practising on Hadīth. They adopt a cautious approach to clothing and ablution. They look up to the Imāms with respect and consider it unlawful to be disrespectful and audacious towards the Imāms. They practise raising of the hands and say Āmīn loudly. The Hanafī ʿulamā' issue fatwās of kufr and bidʿah against them. The pamphlets of the Radā Khānīs are distributed in order to humiliate them whereas there is a lot of rectitude in the writings of the ʿulamā' of Deoband. They are accused of things which they do not do. I therefore request answers to the following issues:

(1) Are the Ahl al-Hadīth Muslims or non-Muslims? (2) Are the Ahl al-Hadīth Sunnīs or bidʿatīs? (3) Is salāh behind the Ahl al-Hadīth permissible? (4) Is it permissible to offer salām to the Ahl al-Hadīth?

Answer: If the Hanafīs are doing exactly as mentioned in the question then the ruling is obvious, there is no need for an answer. But if the fact of the matter has been altered and written down, then the statements of the other party have to be

included in your question. An answer without it is of no benefit.

A Blank Piece Of Paper To Cover A Qur'ānic Ta'wīdh

When Hadrat Wālā writes a Qur'ānic verse for a taʿwīdh, he covers it with a blank piece of paper so that it becomes permissible to touch without ablution and no person is inconvenienced or guilty of sinning.

Practice When Going To The Houses Of Relatives

Hadrat Wālā does not enter the houses of even relatives (neither when he goes on his own accord nor when he is called) unless he is accompanied by a mahram male of that house or by the husband.

Giving Shoes As A Source Of Blessings

If an associate takes shoes from Hadrat Wālā as a source of blessings, Hadrat Wālā takes the precaution of washing and cleaning them because he does not know how the person will use them. It is impermissible to use them if they are impure. Hadrat Wālā says: "There were only two occasions in my entire life when people asked me for shoes."

Caution In Keeping Items For Safekeeping

Hadrat Wālā stores every item for safekeeping separately because if the items get mixed, the rulings of the Sharīʿah change and they are no longer trusts but debts. I only learnt of this today when additional rupees were needed for weighing a parcel. Hadrat Wālā took two separate amounts of rupees from two different envelopes which were given for safekeeping and handed them to me. He distinguished the two by placing those coins which had images of the queen in one envelope and those which had images of the king in the other. He explained the wisdom behind this to me as mentioned above.

By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā is aware and conscious of the ruling of the Sharīʿah in every matter and his mind goes to the most intricate matters immediately. Nowadays people in general do not pay any attention at all to such matters.

Monetary Charity

By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, H̲ad̲rat Wālā's academic charity is displayed by night and day. As for monetary and non-monetary charities, these too continue on a large scale by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. It is H̲ad̲rat Wālā's practice from the very beginning to give one quarter of his income in the form of optional charities. This is apart from the obligatory charities. As far as I know, rarely would you come across someone who gives such a large percentage of his income as charity on a continuous basis. A poet says:

> This could only be done by you. After all, this is what true men do.

I came to know of this practice of H̲ad̲rat Wālā as follows: After I left my job as a Deputy Collector and was appointed as a Deputy Inspector, I was not given a boarding and lodging allowance for the governmental journeys which I had to undertake. The question which came up was where should I stay because it is not permissible in the Sharīʿah to impose on a person on the basis of a governmental influence. H̲ad̲rat Wālā informed me that if a traveller does not have any place to stay, it is permissible for him to stay over in a masjid. He advised me thus: "You must stay over in the masājid and when you leave, make it a point of giving some money for the masjid expenses. In this way, you will benefit the masjid and you will not experience any burden at having stayed there."

He added: "You must set aside a certain percentage – whatever is easy on you – from your salary for optional charities of this nature so that your self does not impose on you to withhold your money. Instead, you must constantly wait for such occasions because when you have accumulated an amount for charitable purposes, then instead of the self imposing on you to withhold it, you will want to free yourself of that amount. You yourself will worry about and search for good causes to spend it. The self will certainly try to impose on you to withhold the first time you decide what amount you are going to set aside every month, but after this one occasion, you will be saved from its imposition. When you then give for a good cause, you will give it with an open heart. However, when you are specifying the amount which you intend setting aside, do not say anything verbally or else it will become a vow and it will then become obligatory on you to spend in good causes. You

must merely think in your heart: 'I am setting aside a certain amount from my salary for spending in good causes. I am doing this solely to make matters easy for me and to systemize my affairs. I am not making it obligatory on myself.'"

Hadrat Wālā then said: "From the very beginning I too set aside one quarter of my income for charitable causes. This has made matters very easy for me."

Beggars

Hadrat Wālā is very principled in every matter. The charities which he gives are not given haphazardly. Rather, he has extremely wise principles for their distribution. For example, if a beggar comes to him and he has the intention of giving him two annas, he says to him: "I can give you two paisa." He does this so that the beggar will value the two annas. Hadrat Wālā will not give him anything until he expresses his agreement to receive the two paisa. Some beggars went away without taking anything so Hadrat Wālā said: "This shows that he is not needy, if not, he would have considered even the paisa to be a boon. After all, he would have suffered no loss had he accepted the paisa, he would have certainly benefited from them, no matter how little."

Hadrat Wālā says on such occasions: "People do not even know how to beg. If they are content with small amounts they will be able to accumulate a lot. If they go around begging for one or two paisa, many people will be prepared to give them. They ask for large amounts, that is why people do not have the courage to give the one or two paisa. Moreover, people generally do not have the means to give large amounts.

Monetary assistance

When giving monetary assistance to anyone, Hadrat Wālā is very particular about not causing the person to become greedy and a parasite. Hadrat Wālā will only help him after he has exhausted all his plans and resources, and is still in need. He will help the person wittingly so that he does not become unconcerned and genuinely values whatever he receives. If a student or seeker seeks monetary assistance, he says to him clearly: "Brother! Here we rely solely on Allāh *taʿālā*. I do not have any accumulated treasure here. If anyone sends money for distribution in good causes and it is in accordance with my principles, I spend it on deserving people. And that too, little at

a time so that it reaches all deserving people. This is why no one must rely on assistance from me. You must look for some type of job where you serve a masjid by giving adhān and so on, and I too will think about it."

In short, he does not allow a person to become unconcerned because this quality creates many evils in the self. At the same time, Hadrat Wālā himself thinks about ensuring that the person continues receiving according to his need. Consequently, if he asks for a loan, Hadrat Wālā will give him an amount lower than what he asked and say: "This is a gift, you must not worry about paying it back." Later, he gives the balance amount in the same way.

Based on many wisdoms, Hadrat Wālā does not render immediate assistance to the one who seeks it. He causes the person to get a bit concerned and then gives it to him. Hadrat Wālā has the utmost kindness with everyone in most dealings but does not let it become obvious to the person.

This is what is genuine honesty and sincerity, and fundamental affection and love because there are countless wisdoms and advantages in it. Hadrat Wālā has the rational affection of a father, not the mad love of a mother. He himself says: "I maintain a balanced external attention so that neither is a person's mind corrupted, nor do others feel offended and no one can be envious of another. So much so, I have certain close relatives with whom I have a very close bond. However, when I interact with them, I do not allow my intense bond with them to become obvious. This is why they are most respectful towards me and hold me in awe. Whereas my heart has a most informal and carefree relationship with them."

Hadrat Wālā does not bother in the least about being maligned for this approach of his. I have not come across anyone like Hadrat Wālā when it comes to his disregard for acceptance or rejection by people, or customary consideration and respect. That is the favour of Allāh *taʿālā* which He bestows on whomever He wills. Only a perfect reformer can possess such a quality. To sum up, Hadrat Wālā always ensures that his mind overpowers his temperament and Dīn supersedes his mind. Only a man endowed with steadfastness and self-control can have such qualities.

Moneys received for distribution

Hadrat Wālā periodically receives moneys for distribution in good causes. He spends them with absolute caution and due importance. However, he only accepts such amounts when the senders make a request in accordance with correct principles and rules of the Sharīʿah. If not, he declines with absolute independence. Examples in this regard were provided in the chapter on spiritual instruction. If he receives a large amount for distribution, he sends details of how it was spent to the sender. But if a sender himself asks for an account of how it was spent, Hadrat Wālā sends the entire amount back saying: "If the person does not trust us, why does he even bother to take this service from us?"

I have not come across anyone as particular and fastidious as Hadrat Wālā in ensuring the correct distribution of received moneys. He spends a lot of time and has to bear much pain and fatigue in ensuring their correct disposal. One sees him preparing lists of eligible recipients, noting estimates, laying down a plan of action for the distribution and making enquiries about the donor and so on. But he does all this without divulging the identity of the donor so that people do not start going to him and imposing on him to give them. In short, it is impossible to see any incompetence, disorganization or ineptitude in this regard. When Hadrat Wālā takes on a responsibility, he carries it out to the full. Major tasks and works are carried out by Hadrat Wālā with absolute calm and system without any confusion, interference to daily activities or any type of disruption. Hadrat Wālā himself says: "By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the academic works which are carried out by major centres and after spending thousands of rupees are – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – carried out here by a few poor people and with small amounts of money."

There are also those well-wishers who send amounts to Hadrat Wālā giving him full freedom to spend them as he wishes. Apart from using such amounts for good causes, he apportions a monthly "salary" to some poor people from such amounts. The present average "salary" is thirty rupees. However, based on many wisdoms, Hadrat Wālā made it the responsibility of these poor recipients to remind him every month – those who live far away must do so via the post and local people via a hand-delivered note. It has also been Hadrat Wālā's practice for

many years that from these amounts – provided it is possible – he purchases books and sends them to Deoband and Sahāranpūr. In most cases he purchases copies of *Iʿlā as-Sunan* and sends them so that this beneficial book may proliferate.

Teaching

When Hadrat Wālā was occupied with teaching he did not waste the time of the students with unrelated discussions and explanations as is the norm with most teachers nowadays. Instead, he would direct their focus solely on solving the meaning of the text. However, there were those rare occasions when he did investigate and explain a certain point in detail.

If a student presented a sensible argument against Hadrat Wālā's explanation he would not try to make up his own explanation as is the general practice of teachers. Instead, he would immediately accept the student's argument. Similarly, if a student presented a sensible objection against something which an author wrote, Hadrat Wālā would not defend the author as is the practice of teachers. He would immediately say: "The author has erred in this point." In this way, the time of the students was not wasted and the books and syllabus were completed very quickly. Hadrat Wālā adopted this practice so that students also become used to it. After explaining this practice, Hadrat Wālā said: "It is of tremendous benefit to teachers. They must make it their methodology."

It was also Hadrat Wālā's practice to present a simple and comprehensive explanation before commencing with a lesson. He would give examples when necessary and ensure that the students understood the subject matter thoroughly. He would then apply the text to his explanation. This practice is of benefit to teachers. And for the benefit of the students, he says: "Students must adhere strictly to just three points. After that whether they remember anything or not, I can guarantee that they will certainly develop academic capability. The points are: (1) They must study the lesson before hand. (2) They must understand it from the teacher's explanation. (3) They must then explain it in their own words. A fourth point is desirable, viz. they must engage in constant revision of past work. If they adopt these points, there will neither be any need for repeated memorization nor hard work."

The above statement was quoted in detail in a previous chapter.

Appointment Of Doormen

Hadrat Wālā suffered many offences and inconveniences from newcomers when it came to matters of introducing themselves and so on. This caused ill-feeling to both parties. It has become even more difficult for Hadrat Wālā due to his present old age and weakness, and is having a detrimental effect on his health. Hadrat Wālā's relatives and attendants insisted on him to appoint a doorman through whom people could converse with Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā was opposed to it because it smacked of a certain status. However, when – based on many wisdoms and advantages – this suggestion was respectfully presented to him repeatedly, he was forced to agree to it. Now when any newcomer arrives, he conveys information about himself through the doorman. Once all the initial stages are crossed in this way, the person is permitted to meet Hadrat Wālā. This proved to be very easy and comforting to both parties. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Initially Hadrat Wālā was quite uncomfortable with this arrangement but once he recalled support for it from Ahādīth, his rational disapproval was removed. However, he still feels a bit burdened by it because it is against his temperament.

I consider it important to present a short investigation on the issue of appointing a doorman – also known as a *bawwāb* or *hājib*. If there is a need or wisdom, e.g. newcomers informing of their arrival, their seeking permission to meet or their wanting to convey some message; then it is permissible to make arrangements for a doorman either temporarily or permanently in order to facilitate matters for both parties and to make things easy for them. Permissibility for this arrangement can be gauged from the following practices of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

١. عن ابن عباس عن عمر في حديث طويل قال: دخلت على حفصة وهي تبكي. فقلت أطلقكن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قالت: لا أدري، هو ذا معتزل في هذه المشربة. فأتيت غلاما له أسود فقلت: إستأذن لعمر...إلى قوله فإذا الغلام يدعوني. فقال: أدخل فقد أذن لك. فدخلت فسلمت على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم...الخ. وفي بعض الروايات قول عمر يا رباح!

استأذن لي إلى قوله وإنه أذن له عند ذلك...الخ. (جمع الفوائد عن الشيخين والترمذي والنسائي، تفسير سورة الطلاق).

Ibn ʿAbbās radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates from ʿUmar radiyallāhu ʿanhu in a lengthy Hadīth. He [ʿUmar radiyallāhu ʿanhu] said: I went to Hafsah and found her crying. I asked: "Did Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam divorce you?" She replied: "I do not know. There he is sitting aloof in that drinking fountain." I went to his black slave-boy and said: "Seek permission for ʿUmar." Soon thereafter the boy called for me and said: "You may go in, he [Rasūlullāh] has permitted you to come in." I went in and offered salām to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam… Another narration states that ʿUmar said: "O Rabāh! Get permission for me to go in"…he was then given permission.

٢. عن أبي موسى في حديث طويل فجلست عند الباب فقلت لأكونن بواب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم اليوم.فجاء أبو بكر فدفع الباب فقلت من هذا؟ فقال: أبو بكر. فقلت: على رسلك. ثم ذهبت فقلت يا رسول الله، هذا أبو بكر يستأذن. فقال: أئذن له. وفيه ثم جاء عمر ثم جاء عثمان وفي رواية: قلت: لأكونن اليوم بواب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ولم يأمرني. وفي أخرى أنه صلى الله عليه وسلم دخل حائطا وأمرني بحفظ باب الحائط. (جمع الفوائد عن الشيخين والترمذي باب فضائل الصحابة المشتركة).

Abū Mūsā radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates in a lengthy Hadīth: "I sat at the entrance and said to myself: I will be the doorman of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam today. Abū Bakr came and knocked on the door. I asked: "Who is it?" He replied: "Abū Bakr." I said: "Wait a bit." I then went to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam and said: "O Rasūlullāh! Abū Bakr is seeking permission to come in." He said: "Let him come in." The narration continues: Then ʿUmar arrived and then ʿUthmān. Another narration states: "I said to myself: I will be the doorman of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam today although he did not order me to be one." Another narration states: "Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam entered an orchard and asked me to guard the entrance of the orchard."

٣. عن مالك بن أوس في حديث طويل قال بينما أنا جالس عنده (أي عند عمر) أتاه حاجبه يرفأ فقال: هل لك في عثمان وعبد الرحمن بن عوف والزبير وسعد بن أبي وقاص

يستأذنون؟ قال: نعم. فدخلوا فسلموا وجلسوا ثم جلس يرفأ يسيرا. ثم قال: هل لك في علي وعباس؟ قال: نعم. فأذن لهما فدخلا وجلسا...الخ. (البخاري، كتاب الجهاد، باب فرض الخمس).

قال الكرماني: يرفأ بفتح التحتية وسكون الراء وفتح الفاء مهموزا وغيره مهموز. هو علم حاجب عمر رضي الله عنه. وقال ابن حجر ويرفأ هذا كان من موالي عمر أدرك الجاهلية ولا يعرف له صحبة. وحج مع عمر في خلافة أبي بكر رضي الله عنه.

Mālik ibn Aus narrates in a lengthy Hadīth: While I was sitting with him [ʿUmar radiyallāhu ʿanhu], his doorman, Yarfa', came to him and said: "ʿUthmān, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAuf, az-Zubayr and Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās are seeking permission to come in. Must I let them come in?" He replied: "Yes." They came in, offered salām and sat down. Yarfa' then sat for a short while and said: "ʿAlī and ʿAbbās would like to come in. Do you permit them?" He said: "Yes." He permitted them, they entered and sat down.

Kirmānī rahimahullāh said: "Yarfa' is the name of the doorman of ʿUmar radiyallāhu ʿanhu." Ibn Hajar rahimahullāh said: "Yarfa' was one of the freed slaves of ʿUmar. He was around during the Jāhilīyyah period but his Companionship [with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam is not established]. He performed hajj with ʿUmar radiyallāhu ʿanhu during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ʿanhu."

Look at how such senior Sahābah could not go to meet Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* without the intermediary of a doorman. In the second narration, the statements of Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "he did not order me" and "asked me to guard the entrance of the orchard" are not contradictory. Initially, he appointed himself as a doorman and then was given permission to be one by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

A Hadīth of Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* makes mention of a grief-stricken woman. It states:

فأتت بابه فلم يجد على بابه بوابين. (كما في جمع الفوائد عن الشيخين وأبي داؤد والترمذي، باب الصبر على النوائب).

She went to his [Rasūlullāh's] door and did not find any doormen there.

This is not a continuous negation. It refers to the original habit of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* while the present practice refers to a specific time due to a specific reason. There is therefore no contradiction. However, if a doorman is appointed out of pride, arrogance, to display one's status and rank or as a formality, then there is no doubt about its despicability. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.

Natural Fastidiousness And Attention To Proportion And Sequence

If the slightest drop of ink or any similar liquid were to fall on Hadrat Wālā's clothing, finger, etc. he finds it most detestable and takes particular care to wash it off immediately. If he has to catch a cold, he will knot one corner of his handkerchief so that when he has to clean his nose he will use just that one corner without messing the entire handkerchief. At the same time, when he has to wash it, it is easy for him to wash just that one corner. When eating rice, he leaves the side which he is not eating completely level while the plate from the side from which he is eating is left absolutely clean. He does this so that if anyone wishes to eat his left-over food, he does not feel it dirty. He said on one occasion: "I am so particular about sequence and proportion that when I clean myself with clods of clay after having relieved myself, I start by using the largest clod, then the one smaller than it and so on."

If anyone brings a utensil of water which is filled to the brim, he does not drink from it until some of it is poured out. He is extremely discomforted when it is filled to the brim and is unable to drink even a little from it. He is unable to eat or drink any person's left over food or drink. However, he is not reluctant to eat with a person from the same plate. He finds it uncomfortable for a person to sit to his left side – where his heart is – when sitting in a vehicle. He emphasises at home that the water can which is filled for the sake of washing hands before eating must not be filled more than half so that it is not difficult to carry when washing the hands. If any strong-smelling item, e.g. guavas, is kept in a room, Hadrat Wālā cannot fall asleep. In short, as regards his fastidious temperament, Hadrat Wālā is the Hadrat Mirzā Jān Jānā *rahimahullāh* of his time.

A Time-Table For The Salāhs

Hadrat Wālā has laid a very fine system for the times of salāh in strict accordance with a sundial. He set a time-table according to it and had it published and printed. When a salāh time is to be changed, the mu'adhdhin is instructed to make an announcement one day before hand. A time-table for the present salāh times is also displayed in the masjid. Watches are set as quickly as possible against a sundial so that there are no differences between the two. The times for the salāhs on the two ʿīds are announced and displayed several days before hand. This is especially done on a Friday so that the villagers who come will learn of the time. The time for the ʿīd salāh is set very much earlier than what it is in the town so that fewer people are able to reach here as opposed to the town. Despite this, the crowd is quite large here. It is desirable to keep the salāh for ʿīd al-ad-hā early while for ʿīd al-fitr a bit later. Hadrat Wālā sets the time accordingly for these two days. In other words, the salāh for ʿīd al-ad-hā is set at one and half hours after sunrise, and for ʿīd al-fitr at two hours after sunrise.

Hadrat Wālā's statement with regard to his practices in acts of worship

The above-mentioned practices are related to one's habit and they have been mentioned because they can be emulated. Some readers may want to know his practices as regards acts of worship. I consider it appropriate to quote a statement of Hadrat Wālā in this regard. It is most beneficial and contains a useful investigation. A scholar wrote to me and requested me to ask Hadrat Wālā about his practices during the month of Ramadān. I must then write back to the scholar with this information.

When I presented this request to Hadrat Wālā, he said: "First of all, it should be known that it is the spiritual masters who have devotional practices. I am merely a student. If you had to pen my practices, they will amount to nothing except blackening a page. Secondly, even if a person does have certain practices, it is futile to inquire about them because we do not emulate practices of followers but of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* or of those whom we are instructed to emulate in the Sunnah, e.g. the Khulafā' Rāshidīn or the senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. In short, apart from those who have been mentioned, the verbal teachings of others are followed and not their

practical practices because it is possible – in fact, most probable – that their practices are peculiar to them and not suited to the conditions of those who want to emulate them. For example, if the number is large and the follower cannot do that number, it will be harmful to him. Similarly, if a person's practices are less due to his special condition, emulating him will also be harmful to others. Because for example, it is written that the salāh of Abdāls is very short but without any defect. And their outward optional actions are very few. So if a person is not of this level, few practices will be harmful to him."

"Anyway, the practical devotional practices of a person should not be emulated. If they are not to be emulated, than to ask about them is also futile. In fact, inquiries in this regard could result in the person [who carries out the practices] experiencing retraction. It may well be that he wants to keep some of his acts of worship hidden from others. Therefore, inquiries in this regard should not be made. It is another matter if knowledge about them is acquired incidentally. Even in this case, a person must not practise on them without asking the person. However, the statements and actions of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* may be emulated unless any proof to the contrary is established."

SOCIAL RECTIFICATION

The Importance Of Social Rectification

Social etiquette is an extremely essential department from among the many departments of Dīn. Unfortunately, not only do the masses but even a majority of the elite do not consider it to be a part of Dīn.

Based on his position as a Hakīm al-Ummat and Mujaddid al-Millat, Hadrat Wālā paid special attention to this department and focussed on it with much detail – in a manner which is probably unprecedented for several centuries. He said on one occasion: "I may not be a Mujaddid-e-Millat but I am certainly a Mujaddid-e-Muʿāsharat (one who revives and rectifies society)." Hadrat Wālā is so particular about the rectification of society that he spends night and day in reprimanding people in this regard without the slightest fear of any criticism from anyone. He does not bother in the least about the accusations of the feeble-minded. As a saying goes:

> The creation is occupied in accusations and criticisms while the true lover is engrossed in his task.

It is not possible to encompass all the social etiquette which Hadrat Wālā teaches. Since a very large number of people revert to him, he has to interact with all sorts of people and he is faced with various dealings with them. There is general disregard for social etiquette so he gives precedence to teaching this aspect first. This is why he gives verbal and practical instruction on every misdemeanour with a very fine comb. Another special reason for this is that based on his natural temperament and the demands of the Sharīʿah, Hadrat Wālā himself is very particular about his own excellent etiquette.

Many points on this subject were mentioned in previous chapters and there is no need to repeat them here. I will therefore confine myself to quoting the prelude and a few etiquette from Hadrat Wālā's excellent book, *Ādāb al-Muʿāsharat* (Social Etiquette). A few miscellaneous etiquette are quoted from *Bahishtī Zewar* as well.

Prelude

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

A (complete) Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe.[1]

The Harm Of Ignorance As Regards Social Etiquette

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. At present, from the five parts of Dīn, the masses consider only two to be a part of Dīn, viz. beliefs and acts of worship. The ʿulamā' who are concerned with the external self believe a third part, viz. transactions, to be a part of Dīn. The spiritual masters consider a fourth part to be a part of Dīn, viz. rectification of internal character. However, there is a fifth part – social etiquette – which almost all three sections of the Muslim nation [masses, ʿulamā' and spiritual masters] consider it to be doctrinally out of Dīn, while some of them consider it to be practically out of Dīn. This is why the other parts are generally or specifically taught or encouraged in lectures and talks, but this part [social etiquette] is never mentioned even verbally. It is therefore totally forgotten both in knowledge and in practice. I consider the lack of mutual love and unity (which is strongly emphasised by the Sharīʿah) to be caused by evil social etiquette. When there is ill-feeling and animosity between people, they remove and prevent goodwill and friendliness, both of which are the strongest bases for mutual love and affection. The notion that good social etiquette has nothing to do with Dīn is refuted by the Qur'ān, Ahādīth and statements of the wise sages.

Social Etiquette In The Qur'ān And Hadīth

A few verses and Ahādīth are quoted to serve as examples.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

> O believers! When you are asked to make room in the assemblies, then make room. Allāh will give you

[1] Bukhārī.

> ample room. When you are asked to get up, then get up.[1]

Look at the consideration one has to give to one's fellow companions.

> Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said that when sitting together to eat, a person should not take several dates at once unless he takes permission from those who are eating with him.[2]

Look! A matter which is extremely insignificant is prohibited solely because it is unmannerly and because it would be detested by others.

> Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "A person who eats garlic or onions should remain aloof [from an assembly]."[3]

A person is prohibited because it would cause a slight disturbance to others.

> Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "It is not permissible for a guest to stay over for so long that he imposes on the host."[4]

This H̲adīth prohibits us from imposing on others and constraining them.

> Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said that when eating with others, a person should not stop eating – even if he has eaten to his fill – until the others stop because they may feel shy and stop eating merely because he has stopped while they are still hungry.[5]

This proves that we should not do anything which would cause embarrassment to others. Some people are naturally shy to take an item while in a gathering and they find it burdensome. Alternatively, if they are asked for something in the presence of others, they are ashamed to refuse or to excuse themselves. In

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[1] Sūrah al-Mujādilah, 58: 11.
[2] Bukhārī and Muslim.
[3] Bukhārī and Muslim
[4] Bukhārī and Muslim.
[5] Ibn Mājah.

the first case, the heart may desire to take the item and in the second case the heart may not want to give an item. Such persons should neither be given in an assembly nor should anything be taken from them in an assembly.

> It is related in a Hadīth that Hadrat Jābir *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* came to the house of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and knocked on the door. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked: "Who is it?" He replied: "It is me." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said in a tone of disapproval: "It is me, it is me."[1]

This shows that we must speak clearly so that others can understand what we are saying. To speak in vague terms which makes it difficult for others to understand entails causing them confusion.

> Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was the most beloved to the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*, yet no one stood up when they saw him because they knew that he disapproved of it."[2]

This means that any special way of showing respect to a person or serving him in a way which is against his temperament should not be done even if one wants to do it. The wish of the other must be given preference. Some people insist on extending certain services to the elders which causes pain to the latter.

> Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that it is not permissible to sit in-between two people (who wittingly sat next to each other) without their permission.[3]

We learn from this that we must not do anything which would agitate others.

> A Hadīth states that when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* needed to sneeze, he would cover

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[1] Bukhārī and Muslim.
[2] Tirmidhī.
[3] Tirmidhī.

> his mouth with his hand or garment in order to stifle the sound.

This means that we must show so much of consideration to those sitting near us that even a loud sound must not frighten or alarm them.

> Hadrat Jābir *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates: When we used to attend the assembly of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, a person would sit wherever he found a place.[1]

In other words, a person who enters later must not cut through to go to the front. This proves the etiquette of an assembly.

> Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*,[2] Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*[3] and Hadrat Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*[4] state that when visiting a sick person, one should not sit too near the patient. The visitor must sit for a short while and leave.

Look at the fine consideration which a person has to bear in mind so that he does not cause the slightest burden to the other. Sometimes, a patient needs to change his position, stretch out his legs or finds it difficult to engage in a conversation. However, those whose sitting nearby brings comfort to the person are excluded from this prohibition.

> Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* explains the reason behind the necessity of taking a bath on a Friday. He says that most of the people were labourers whose perspiration and dirty clothes caused an odour to emanate from them. Taking a bath was therefore made obligatory. This ruling was abrogated later on.

We learn from this that it is obligatory to abstain from causing the slightest discomfort to others. Note: The Ahādīth which are not referenced have been quoted from *Mishkāt* and *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn*.

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[1] Abū Dāwūd.
[2] Narrated by Razīn.
[3] Narrated by Bayhaqī.
[4] Narrated by Abū Dāwūd.

> Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* narrates: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* got up very silently from our bed on the night of Barā'ah, put on his shoes silently, opened the door silently, went out without a sound and shut the door noiselessly.[1]

Look at the consideration shown to a sleeping person. Look at how all these actions were performed noiselessly so that the sleeping person is neither disturbed nor awakened suddenly which would cause alarm.

> Hadrat Miqdād ibn Aswad *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* relates a lengthy story wherein he states: We were the guests of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and sleeping over at his place. We used to sleep after ʿishā. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* came in (and since it was possible for the guest to be either awake or asleep) he would offer salām in a tone which would be heard by the one who was awake but would not disturb the one who was asleep.[2]

The same consideration as learnt from the previous Hadīth is learnt from this incident. There are many other Ahādīth on this subject. The books of jurisprudence clearly state that salām should not be offered to a person who is eating or drinking, conducting a lesson, engaged in dhikr and so on. We learn from this that the Sharīʿah disapproves of disturbing a person who is occupied in a necessary task because it would cause his heart to be diverted. Similarly, the jurists state that a person suffering from halitosis should not be permitted in the masjid. All this shows us that it is extremely essential to put an end to all causes of disturbance and discomfort.

Etiquette – The Soul Of Society

After looking at the above-quoted proofs collectively, it becomes absolutely clear that the Sharīʿah emphasises that no action or condition of a person must cause the slightest discomfort or harm, burden or heaviness, constriction or restriction, bother or agitation, dislike or displeasure, confusion or worry, or disquiet and anxiety to another person or persons. Rasūlullāh

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[1] Sunan Nasa'ī.
[2] Muslim.

sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam did not restrict himself to highlighting this by his words and actions alone. Rather, when he saw any inattention in this regard in his attendants and companions, he imposed on them to observe the correct etiquette and also taught them practically by delegating tasks to them. A Sahābī brought him a gift and entered without offering salām and without seeking permission to enter. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* instructed him to go outside, come back, say the salām and say: "I am here."[1]

The basis of good character and mannerisms with people is an order which negates any harm or discomfort reaching any person. This is described in a very comprehensive statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when he said:

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

A (complete) Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe.[2]

Etiquette Precedes Everything

Anything which causes harm or discomfort – even though it may appear to be monetary or physical service, or respect and reverence – is included in bad character because comfort is the core of creation and is given preference to service, while mere service is like the peel without the core. The uselessness of it is obvious. Although social etiquette are third in line after beliefs and compulsory acts of worship, shortcomings as regards beliefs and acts of worship are detrimental to one's own self while shortcomings as regards social etiquette cause harm to others. And it is more serious to cause harm to others than to one's own self. Thus, on this basis, social etiquette takes precedence over beliefs and acts of worship. After all, there must be some reason why Allāh *taʿālā* mentioned good social etiquette before salāh, fear, moderation in spending and belief in His oneness. He says in Sūrah al-Furqān:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِيْنَ يَمْشُوْنَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَّاِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجٰهِلُوْنَ قَالُوْا سَلٰمًا

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[1] Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd.
[2] Bukhārī.

The servants of the Merciful are they who walk humbly on the earth. When the ignorant ones address them, they reply: "Peace!"[1]

[The above verse makes reference to social etiquette].

It is then followed by:

وَالَّذِيْنَ يَبِيْتُوْنَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَّقِيَامًا

Who spend their night before their Sustainer, prostrating and standing.[2]

وَالَّذِيْنَ اِذآ اَنْفَقُوْا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوْا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوْا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ قَوَامًا

[The servants of the Merciful are they] who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly; but are on a middle way between the two [extremes].[3]

وَالَّذِيْنَ لاَ يَدْعُوْنَ مَعَ اللهِ اِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ

Who invoke no other sovereign with Allāh.[4]

The above three verses make mention of salāh, fear, moderation in spending and belief in Allāh's oneness. All these entail obligatory acts of obedience and beliefs. Precedence to social etiquette over obligatory acts is only in certain aspects, but in all aspects over optional acts of worship.

A Hadīth states that someone spoke of two women in the presence of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* One of them used to engage in excessive salāh and fasting (this refers to optional salāh and fasting because excessiveness can only be in optional acts), but she used to inconvenience and vex her neighbours. The second woman did not perform too many salāhs and fasts (she sufficed with the obligatory acts) but did not offend her neighbours in any way. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that the first is destined to the Hell-fire while the second is destined for Paradise.[5]

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[1] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 63.
[2] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 64.
[3] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 67.
[4] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 68.
[5] Targhīb wa Tarhīb on the authority of Ahmad, Bazzāz, Ibn Hayyān, Hākim and Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah.

Although social etiquette does not take precedence over transactions and dealings as regards the above aspect – because shortcomings in this regard certainly harms others – it [social etiquette] is more important than transactions and dealings on the basis of another aspect. That is, even though the masses may not consider them to be so, the elite consider transactions and dealings to be part of Dīn; while social etiquette are only considered to be part of Dīn by the super elite and not so by most of the elite. Some of them may consider social etiquette to be part of Dīn but do not believe it to be as important as transactions and dealings. This is why they display less practical importance to it. As for the rectification of internal character, it falls in the same ruling as compulsory acts of worship. The aspect of precedence of social etiquette over acts of worship as mentioned above is applicable here as well.

To sum up, the precedence and importance of social etiquette over all other departments of Dīn – whether partially or totally – has been established. Despite this, the majority of the masses and some of the elite do not pay any practical attention to it. Those who do practise on it do not bother in the least to reprimand, teach and rectify others whether the others are outsiders or their own associates. Since quite some time I perceived the need to note some essential social etiquette which are encountered quite often. Although I constantly correct my associates verbally in this regard, I certainly have the tendency of becoming angry and annoyed. May Allāh *taʿālā* pardon me and rectify me.

I teach and speak about these matters in most of my lectures, but as per the following saying, the power of the written word exceeds that of the spoken one:

العلم صيد والكتابة قيد

Knowledge is a prey and writing it down is its trap.

I therefore felt the need to write it down. However, it was constantly deferred and the present time was the time destined by Allāh *taʿālā*. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for having afforded me the opportunity now. I will note the etiquette as I recall them or as they occur. I will not follow any particular sequence. If this booklet is read to children – in fact, to adults

as well – then Allāh willing the joys of Paradise will be experienced in this very world. As the saying goes:

> That place is a Paradise where no harm is caused to another and where no person has a motive with another.

Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Etiquette

Asking for an item

Do not ask for anything from a person regarding whom you have ascertained with certainty that he will not be able to refuse although it is most dear to him. Do not ask him for it even if you are borrowing it or taking it as a loan. However, if you are certain that he will not feel burdened or will freely refuse if he feels burdened, then there is no harm in asking. The same applies to asking someone to carry out a task for you, making a request to him or asking him to intercede on your behalf. Nowadays people are quite careless in these matters.

Carrying the shoes of an elder

If you intend carrying the shoes of an elder, do not take them into your hands while he is still removing them from his legs because it could cause him to fall down.

Serving and attending to a person

There are certain services which a person does not like to be done to him. You should therefore not insist on rendering a service which inconveniences the person and which he clearly prohibited or is gauged through indications.

Sitting near a person

If you have to sit next to a person do not sit so close as to cause him anxiety nor so far that it becomes difficult to converse with him.

Consideration to a person who is occupied

When you see a person occupied in some work, do not disturb him because it would cause his heart to become diverted and he will feel a burden on his heart. In fact, you should not even go and sit directly in front of him.

Inform the host if you do not intend eating

If you go as a guest and do not wish to eat – whether because you have already eaten, you are fasting or for any other reason – then inform your host immediately on arrival. Let it not happen that he makes arrangements and bears fatigue in making them, and then when it is the time to eat you tell him that you will not be eating. All his arrangements and food would have gone to waste.

Do not accept an invitation without permission from the host

A guest must not accept an invitation from someone else without obtaining permission from his host.

Inform the host before leaving

If a guest needs to go anywhere, he must inform his host first so that the host is not inconvenienced into having to search for him at the time of meals.

Presenting a need to a person

If you go anywhere for the fulfilment of a need, inform the person the moment you get an opportunity. Normally when a person is asked for the reason for his coming, he says he merely came to meet the person. The latter is then at ease and does not expect you to present any need to him. If you were to present your need later on, it will cause the person much inconvenience.

Speaking to a person

When speaking to a person, sit in front of him and address him. It is annoying to address a person from behind.

Returning an item to its place

If an item is used by several people, the person who uses it last must return it to the place from where it was taken. It is most important to do this.

Replace a bed or sofa to its place

There are times when a bed or sofa is removed from its place. If it is brought forward so that people could sit or lie on it, it must be kept aside once people have finished using it.

Do not look at the letters of others

You should neither read a letter which is not addressed to you nor look at a person writing a letter when you know he is writing to someone other than yourself.

Do not look at the documents of others

Similarly, if documents are left lying in front of a person, do not pick them up to read them. The person may have intended keeping the documents of another person confidential from you but had left them on his desk.

Do not eat the food of another without his permission

If a person is proceeding to eat somewhere or has been invited to eat somewhere, you must not accompany him because the person who invited him may call you in out of embarrassment while his heart does not really want you to join in. Some people accept such invitations very quickly resulting in eating the person's food without his real approval. If the person refuses the invitation, it would be an indignity to the house-owner. Furthermore, the house-owner's hesitance in the first instance when he sees [the uninvited person], is in itself an injury to the house-owner.

Reminding a person of a task

If you have to present a need to a person and you had already made mention of it to him before, then when you present it a second time, you must still provide full details. Do not give incomplete details by relying on what you had said before or by expecting him to work out the details. It is possible that the person does not recall the previous time when you mentioned it to him. Consequently, he will misunderstand you or not understand at all.

Drawing the attention of a person from behind

Some people have the habit of sitting behind a person and when they wish to speak to him, they clear their throats to catch his attention. This is a very disturbing habit. It is better to sit in front of the person and tell him whatever you have to say. If you have to draw the attention of a person who is occupied, you may do this [clearing the throat or any other similar method] only if there is an absolute need. Otherwise, it is better to sit in a place where he does not know of your arrival

and to remain waiting there until he completes his task. If not, this could also cause him distress. Once the person has completed his task, you may go forward, sit before him and say whatever you have to say.

Shaking hands with a person who is in a hurry

If a person is walking swiftly and you can see that he is in a hurry to go somewhere, do not stop him to shake his hands because it may disturb him. Similarly, do not stop him to speak to him.

Shaking hands with everyone in an assembly

When some people arrive in an assembly, they shake hands separately with each person irrespective of whether they know the person or not. This wastes a lot of time and the entire assembly gets occupied in this. It is better to just go and shake hands with the person whom you came to meet. However, if you know the others as well, there is no harm in shaking hands with them.

Speak clearly

Some people are in the habit of speaking a few words audibly and others silently. Consequently, the entire statement is not heard or it is heard incompletely. In both cases, it is possible that the addressee may misunderstand or be confused. Both could cause ill-feeling. Every part of whatever you have to say must be said absolutely clearly.

Listening to what is said

Listen attentively to what is said and if you are in doubt about anything, ask the speaker immediately. Do not act on your own assumption without having understood what was said. Sometimes, acting on one's misunderstanding causes harm to the speaker.

Inform seniors of the completion of a task

If a senior asks you to carry out a task, make sure you inform him of its completion once you have carried it out. Seniors generally wait to be informed.

Do not interfere in matters of the host

If you go as a guest somewhere, never interfere in matters of the host. However, if the host delegates a certain task to you, there is no harm in seeing to it.

Etiquette with elders

If you are with your elders, do not do anything independently of them without their permission.

Give a clear reply

A new comer was asked: "When do you intend to leave?" He replied: "When you ask me to." Hadrat Wālā said: "This is a vague answer. How should I know what your situation is, what is to your advantage and how much of time you have at your disposal? You ought to have replied by informing me of your intention. And if you are so overcome by respect, obedience and handing over matters to me, you should have said: 'My intention is to leave on such and such day, but it depends on your order.'" In short, do not give a reply which burdens the questioner.

Students must abstain from worldly activities

A student asked for a ta'wīdh for labour pains on behalf of someone else. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "A student must not present the worldly needs of others. If anyone makes such a request to him he must excuse himself by saying that it is disrespectful for him to do such a thing."

Inform your host of your intentions

A student had visited previously and had stayed over at someone else's house. He came a second time with the intention of staying over at the Khānqāh, but did not mention this. Consequently, no food was sent to him. It was learnt later on that he asked for food. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "You ought to have informed me of your intention, how could I have known? Since you had stayed elsewhere previously, I could not have asked you about your intentions."

Addressing the attendant of the host

A guest said to the attendant of the host: "Get me water." Hadrat Wālā said: "One should never adopt an authoritarian

tone, it is most unmannerly. One should rather say: 'Can I have some water please?'"

Interfering in the conversation of an assembly

If a certain conversation is taking place in an assembly, a newcomer should not enter into it by offering salām in order to draw attention to himself. Instead, he must enter silently with his gaze lowered and sit down. He may then offer salām, etc. once he finds the opportunity.

Do not insist on a person to eat

Do not insist on a guest to eat. It is unbecoming.

Sitting behind a person

It is most burdensome to sit behind a person. The person in front finds it most difficult to get up and move around. One should avoid doing this.

Do not remove a person's shoes from their place

If a person's shoes are left in a certain place, do not remove them to make place for your own shoes. This generally happens when people enter masājid and other similar venues. The person who leaves his shoes in a certain place has the most right over that place. It will cause him a lot of inconvenience if he were to return to that place and finds his shoes not there. As the saying goes: Paradise is the place where there is no inconvenience.

Do not disturb a person occupied in dhikr

If a person is engaged in his personal forms of dhikr, do not go and sit nearby waiting to speak to him. This diverts the heart from the dhikr. Remain seated in your place.

Abstain from formalities

You must always be clear in what you have to say and abstain from formalities and long drawn out preludes and introductions.

Abstain from intermediaries

If you have to send a message to anyone, do it personally. Do not unnecessarily use others as intermediaries to convey your message.

Abstain from offending a person who presents a gift

If you receive a gift, it is most offensive to give it in charity immediately after receiving it. You may give it after some time when the giver is not able to learn of it.

Do not impose your will on the assemblies of others

A villager was speaking and began making certain ill-mannered statements. One of those who were present in the assembly stopped him through gestures. Hadrat Wālā reprimanded the man severely by saying: "What right did you have to stop him? You are intimidating the people and turning it into Pharaoh's assembly. If you claim that the villager was ill-mannered, then I can say that Allāh *taʿālā* has also given me a tongue to stop him from it. Why are you interfering?" Hadrat Wālā then addressed the villager: "You may say whatever you wish without any hindrance whatsoever."

Making clear who an item is brought for

A man brought some flour, placed it one side and said: "I have brought this." He did not clarify for whom he brought it. Hadrat Wālā gave it back to him and said: "It will not be accepted unless you tell me who you brought it for – for me or for the madrasah – at the time when you present it to me."

Using an item of another without permission

I needed a book which belonged to the madrasah and which was loaned to a friend of mine. The friend was not present at the time. I asked someone to search for the book in the place where my friend normally sits but it could not be found. I got up and went to search for it myself but could not find it. Suddenly someone's gaze fell on a student who was sitting nearby and studying a book, while the book which I was looking for was placed under the book which he was studying. This student was reprimanded because – first of all – he used an item belonging to someone else without the latter's permission, and this is impermissible. Secondly, he caused several people to be inconvenienced in searching for the book.

Inform seniors of the completion of a task

If a senior asks you to carry out a task, make sure you inform him of its completion once you have carried it out. Seniors

generally wait to be informed and remain uneasy until they are informed.

The manner of using a hand fan

A person who is fanning another has to take several factors into consideration. First of all, he must clean the hand fan thoroughly with his hands or a cloth because there are times when it lies on the ground and gets dirty with dust, tiny pebbles and other similar things. If a person were to pick it up and fan another without cleaning it, these tiny particles could get into the eyes and hurt the person. Secondly, the person who is fanning must not be so close to the other that he ends up hitting him with the fan, nor so far away that he does not perceive any wind. Also, do not fan with too much force which could distress the person. Thirdly, be considerate of others who are sitting nearby so that they are not disturbed. Fourthly, when the person whom you are fanning intends to get up, ensure you move the fan away from him so that you do not hit him with it. Fifthly, if he starts removing a piece of paper or other similar light item, stop fanning him [or else the piece of paper will fly away].

Presenting a gift

Certain temperaments are most burdened at accepting gifts from people who have certain needs to be fulfilled by the person. For example, you request him to make duʿā' for you, ask him for a taʿwīdh, request him to intercede on your behalf, request him to accept you as a murīd and so on. You must be very careful in this regard. A gift must be given solely out of love, it must not be give out of any motive. Do not present the gift at the time when you express your need to him or else it will seem as if you gave the gift because you wanted your need to be fulfilled. Similarly, when presenting a gift do not cause the person to think that you gave it because you have a need to be fulfilled.

There is no need to render unnecessary services

Before the fajr s̲alāh a person filled a water can and placed a miswāk over it with this in mind that when I leave home for the masjid, I will perform wud̲ū' there. Incidentally, I had wud̲ū' when I came to the masjid so I proceeded directly inside. On reaching there, my eyes fell on the water jug and I recognized my miswāk on it. I concluded that the water can was placed for

me. I made inquiries in order to ascertain who placed it there. After posing the question several times, the person who placed it admitted that he had in fact placed it. I spoke to him briefly before the salāh and at length after the salāh, and said to him: "Look, you filled the water can solely on the assumption that I will perform wudū' but you did not assume that I may already be in a state of wudū'." Consequently, your assumption was wrong. Had my eyes not fallen on the water can, and the person who placed it was himself not present here, the water can would have remained filled in that state and no one else could have used it because - firstly - the fact that it is filled means that someone had filled it for his own use and placed it there. Secondly, placing the miswāk over the water can is an absolute indication that it is reserved for someone and others cannot use it [because this is what is generally understood]. Since no one can use it, you have unnecessarily reserved an item which is for the general use of the public. And this is totally against the intention of the person who endowed it to the masjid. Thus, how can this action be permissible? This is with regard to the water can. As for the miswāk, you removed it unnecessarily from its safe place and placed it in an unsafe place. Furthermore, you did not even make arrangements to watch over it so that once the person for whom you left it there finishes using it, you may return it to its original place. You assumed that the person will use it and then return it to its place. By doing this, you placed the miswāk in danger of getting lost. Look at how many impermissible actions and inconveniences your service caused! You must never do this in future. You must either take permission to do it or you may do it when you see the person making preparations to perform wudū'. If not, unprincipled services will cause inconvenience, and not the comfort which they were supposed to bring about."

Note: The same can be said about innovations; they appear to be acts of obedience – like this outward "service", but many harms are concealed within them. These are not recognized by people of little understanding. As was the case with this service which contained intricate harms unknown to the one who rendered it.

Making a request

A student in the madrasah wrote his need for clothing on a piece of paper and sent the note with another student. The

student who sent him was summoned and asked the reason for not coming himself. He replied: "I had some other work to do so I sent it with the other student." He was told: "First of all, your action smacks of disrespect because although you are living in one place [in the madrasah hostel] you did not come personally just because you had some other work and not because you were feeling shy or ashamed (because this could have been a valid excuse). You merely sent a message with another as though you are an equal. Secondly, it smacks of disinterest because you acted carelessly. Thirdly, you took a service from another person. It shows you are learning to order people around from now." Hadrat Wālā added: "The punishment for your ill-mannered conduct is that I am deferring your request for four days. You must then come personally and make your request." The student came personally on the fourth day and his request was received gladly.

Method of intercession

The intercessions of today comprise more of a compulsion and pressurizing where a person wields his authority over others. This is unlawful in the Sharīʿah. If you intercede do it in a manner that does not interfere in the least with the free-will of the person. Intercession of this nature is not only permissible but merits reward.

Resorting to the influence of another to get your own work done

Similar is the case with resorting to the influence of another to get your own work done. For example, you are close to a senior person so you use your closeness to get your work done or your need fulfilled from a person who has faith in the senior person or is influenced by him. You know through circumstances that the person will not do that work happily for you, he is just doing it because of your closeness to the senior person and so that the latter is not displeased with him. It is unlawful to get your work done in this manner or to make such a request.

Abiding to appointed times

A person asked for a taʿwīdh. I [Hadrat Wālā] asked him to come at a certain time. He did not come at the specified time but came later and asked for the taʿwīdh. He added: "You had asked me to come and I have come now." He did not mention when he was asked to come. I asked him: "Brother, what time did I ask you to come?" Only then did he mention the time. I

said: “This is another time now, it is not the time when I had asked you to come.” He offered an excuse of being occupied with some work. I said: “Just as you had a reason for not coming at that time, I have a reason and an excuse for not seeing to you at present. How can I devote myself to just one type of work and not do any of my own work?”

Eavesdropping

A student asked a ruling via another student, and stood hidden in one place so that he could overhear the answer. I happened to spot him so I called for him, reprimanded him and asked: “What is the reason to eavesdrop like a thief? Has anyone stopped you from coming here? If you were feeling shy, you could have asked for the reply from the one whom you sent. It is sinful to eavesdrop because it may well be that the speaker wants to keep a certain point concealed from the one who is hiding.”

The manner of giving way to a person

A person was drawing a floor fan. I got up for some work, so he tugged the rope of the fan towards himself so that the fan does not strike my head. I explained to him not to do that because if I were to stand at the spot where the fan was because that spot is now empty and the rope were to slip from his hand or it were to snap, the fan will strike my head. Instead, he ought to leave the rope of the fan completely so that the fan could roll to its place and come to a standstill. The person standing up would then take his precaution when getting up.

A guest must inform of his dietary requirements

It is the duty of a guest to inform his host of his dietary requirements on his arrival. For example, if he has less chillies in his food or he abstains from certain foods and so on. Some people put on airs only when the food is laid out on the table.

Waving a fan on the eating table

Sometimes sugar is placed on the table. Some attendants wave the hand or floor fan in such a way that the sugar flies from its container. At other times, it flies from the spoon. An attendant must be wary of these things.

Taking one's own decisions in matters of others

A sealed envelope was sent to me from my brother's house with a worker so that it may be posted. I myself had asked for the letter because it had something to do with me. On the way, the worker saw the post courier proceeding to the post office with a bundle of post. The worker thought to himself that when the letter which he was asked to bring to me reaches the post office, it will only leave by post tomorrow. So he gave it to the courier so that it would leave with all the post today because the courier will hand it over to the post master. In the meantime, I was waiting for the letter and thinking to myself that my brother's family will send the letter just now. When it did not come to me, I made inquiries and this entire story unfolded. I called for the worker and said: "How could you have made your own decisions in a matter which was entrusted to you? You did not know what reason there was in sending the letter to me first. You do not know whether I would have wanted to give the letter to the courier to take over to the post office. Your own decision put an end to all these reasons. What was the need for you to interfere? All you had to do was convey the letter to me." The worker apologized and said that this will not happen in future.

Standing in front of a person

A student came to seek permission to go to the bazaar and remained standing. I became occupied in some work and he continued standing there, waiting for me. I felt his standing there burdensome because it appeared like he was imposing on me. I explained to him thus: "A person feels restricted. When you saw me occupied, you ought to have sat down. You could have then spoken to me once you saw me free."

Consider the correct manner of presenting a gift

A guest placed two rupees in my pen-pot as a gift and did not inform me about it. I woke up for the ʿasr salāh and kept the pen-pot aside. After the salāh I asked for the pen-pot because I needed it. When it was brought to me I noticed the two rupees in it. I asked about who had placed the money in it and a man admitted after much hesitation. I gave the money back to him saying: "If you do not know how to give a gift, it is not even necessary for you to give a gift. Is this how a gift is given? First of all, a gift is given to bring comfort and joy to a person. Now

that I had to worry so much in making inquiries about it, the objective of the gift has been lost. Secondly, if someone had taken the money from the pen-pot, neither you nor I would have known. You would have been under the assumption that you gave me two rupees while I would not have benefited from it in the least. I would then have to count your favour for nothing. Thirdly, even if no one took the money and it came to me, how would I have known who gave it and for what? Since I would not have known this, I would have had to bear the burden of keeping it for a few days as a trust. It would then have to be used as a lost item."

"These are all formalities. A simple and straightforward manner would have been to give it directly in the hand of the person you wish to give. If you were worried about giving it in the presence of others, you could have given it in privacy. If you could not find a private opportunity, you could have said that you want to speak to me in privacy. You could have then given it to me. When a person receives a gift, it would be appropriate for him to make mention of it. This could be done in the presence of the giver or in his absence in the case where he would feel embarrassed."

Giving a gift by calling the person to one's house

On one of my journeys, some people called me to their house and wanted to give me a gift. I explained to them that by doing this, others will assume that it essential to take a person to one's house in order to give him a gift. Poor people will then hesitate about inviting a person to their house. It will cause them remorse. If anyone wishes to give me a gift, he must come directly to me and speak to me so that my freedom is not hindered.

The right of a trust

A man arrived from Sahāranpūr on a Friday on the 12 o'clock train. One of his relatives sent a block of ice for me. The man reached the Madrasah at a time when the students had not gone for the Jumuʿah salāh as yet. He left the ice in a large tray and proceeded to the Jāmiʿ Masjid. After the salāh, one of my friends whom I had requested to deliver a lecture commenced with his lecture. This friend was shy to deliver a speech in my presence so I left the masjid and went to the Madrasah. The man [who brought the ice] sat for the talk and came to the

Madrasah after a long time. He then presented the ice which was wrapped in a cloth.

First of all, I felt it inappropriate to have ice wrapped in cloth. It ought to have been wrapped in a blanket, canvas or placed in sawdust. However, this was done by someone else and therefore out of his control. However, he displayed shortcomings in the work which was entrusted to him. He ought to have conveyed the ice to my house the moment he reached. If this thought did not cross his mind for whatever reason, he should have come immediately after the Jumuʿah salāh. If he did not feel like coming at that time [and wanted to listen to the talk], he should have informed me when I was leaving the masjid and I would have taken the ice away.

He now came and gave it to me after two hours. Almost all of it had melted by then. Just a little remained. When I learnt of the entire incident, I explained what he ought to have done and tried to make him understand. However, I realized that my entire explanation was not sufficient for his temperament. I therefore refused to accept it. I did this so that he will remember for the rest of his life. He became quite distressed. I said: "You wasted an entrusted item which belonged to someone else. You now want to give me after you wasted it away. I do not wish to be indebted to anyone without any reason. You may use the remaining ice. Either you should not have accepted the responsibility or you should have fulfilled its right in full."

Consideration to a sleeping person

I came to the Madrasah in the morning from the forest and sat down on the veranda. A relative was sleeping there so I sat down very silently. The person who takes the post brought the letters which were to be posted by me. I checked them and handed them over to him so that he may take them away. He took them and placed them loudly in a tin box which is kept there for this purpose. The post cards made a loud sound when they touched the tin box. I explained to him that one has to be considerate of those who are sleeping.

A money-order should not be sent with a letter

A person wrote a letter in which he requested replies to certain issues. He also wrote that he is sending a five rupee money-order. Because he made mention of the money-order, I did not

send a reply to his letter because I felt I should wait for the money-order so that I could send the receipt for it at the same time. Many days passed and I still did not receive the money-order. In the meantime, my heart was imposing on me to write a reply to his other issues. I was trapped in this conflict for several days. Finally, I wrote to him saying: "Either you should have not made mention of the money-order in the letter or you should have written about some other issues which needed a reply."

Abstain from fruitless complaining

A man came with his son and complained about a certain maktab, saying: "The principal expelled my son." I explained to him in a kind way that I have no influence over that maktab. He said: "I heard that you are its patron." I replied: "I am only informed of the salaries that are to be given, I do not interfere with its administrative affairs." He began complaining about the principal again so I said: "What is the benefit of talking about something which will not bring any results? It amounts to nothing but backbiting." When he was about to leave after a short while, he came back to me to shake hands with me. Again he said: "That principal did a great injustice by expelling my son." Since I had already explained my position to him and had stopped him from complaining, I became extremely angry when he repeated his complaint. I reprimanded him severely and said: "It is most unfortunate that despite whatever I said, you are still repeating something which is fruitless and against my temperament." The man tried to give some explanations but they were all in vain. I sent him off in that condition.

Abstaining from formalities

A man who had come here previously came after ʿishā and began walking towards where I was sitting and reading something. He was approaching at a slow pace, stopping periodically and watching me at the same time. I gauged that he wants to come to me but is holding back because he wants to be given permission. First of all, I do not meet anyone after ʿishā, especially a person whom I have already met. This makes it worse when a person has no purpose; he merely wants to sit and talk – as is the habit with most people. When I am occupied in my waẕīfah, I find it difficult to turn my attention to anything else, especially when it is unnecessary. Furthermore, the exterior form of seeking permission imposes

on me to say something. All these factors intensified my disapproval. I eventually had to stop my wazīfah and had to tell him: “This is not the time to sit with me.” He replied: “I was merely going to drink water.” This caused me to become even more annoyed because he was now fabricating a point. He insisted that he was certainly going to drink water. I asked: “Why, then, did you adopt a manner which causes doubts? You ought to have gone from the other side and without pausing periodically.”

Do not make a statement without verifying it

I asked a student about a certain worker: “What is he doing?” The student replied: “He is sleeping.” I learnt later on that he was awake in his house. I explained to the student: “First of all, it is wrong to consider something to be definite merely on your assumption. When you considered it to be uncertain, you ought to have expressed your assumption to me. You should have said: ‘He is probably sleeping.’ This answer too is a lower answer. The actual answer which you should have given is this: ‘I do not know. I will go and check, and come back and inform you.’ You should then check, ascertain the facts and inform me. The other harm of your assumption is that if I had not established that he was awake, and was still under the assumption that he is asleep, then most of the times I feel that a sleeping person should not be disturbed and it is unkind to wake him up unnecessarily. It is also possible that it may have harmed some necessary work even though the necessity was not very intense. The harm would be tolerated because it was more intolerable to awaken a sleeping person. If it was learnt later on that he was in fact not sleeping, the effect of the condemnation of not being able to carry out the necessary work would have fallen on the heart, and the supposedly sleeping person would become angry on the one who claimed that he was asleep. Now all these problems would have occurred because of saying something without verifying it first. One must always be cautious in this regard.”

Clarify the purpose of your arrival

A man came so I asked him: “What is your reason for coming here? Do you want to say something?” He replied: “No, I merely came to meet you.” When he was about to depart, he asked me for a taʿwīdh after the maghrib salāh – between the fard and Sunnah salāh. I said: “There is a time and place for everything.

This is not the time for making out a taʿwīdh. When you arrived I had asked you and you said that you merely came to meet me. What is the meaning of making such a request now? You ought to have made the request at that time when I asked you. People consider it etiquette to remain silent [when they are asked the reason for their coming] but I consider it unmannerly. What it means is that the other person is our worker and we can ask him for whatever we want whenever we like, and he must carry it out. Now you yourself just think how much of work I have at present. First of all, I have to perform my Sunnah and optional s̲alāhs, then I have certain things to say to those who are occupied in dhikr and listen to them, and I have to feed the guests. It is so sad that etiquette and manners have completely disappeared from the world."

"You must come at another time for the taʿwīdh. Remember, wherever you go, you must first mention the purpose of your arrival, especially when you are asked. I pose this question to every newcomer so that he may say whatever he has to say. In this way, neither is he inconvenienced nor am I. I pose this question because most people come here with needs and some of them cannot speak due to their shyness and bashfulness. Or they cannot express a private matter in the presence of others. When I ask them, they tell me what there need is or inform me that it is a private matter which needs some privacy. Once I find an opportune moment, I call then in private and listen to what they have to say. But if a person does not say anything at all, how can I know what he wants? Obviously I do not have knowledge of the unseen."

Listen attentively before giving a reply

A person who was engaged in dhikr was given the time off after maghrib to come to me so that I could teach and dictate different ways of dhikr to him. I called for him [at the appointed time]. He was at a distance so he did not reply verbally. Instead, he got up from his place and proceeded towards me. I did not know that he heard me and was already walking towards me, so I called out for him a second time on the assumption that he did not hear my first call. He reached me by then, so I asked him: "Why did you not reply? You did not consider me worthy of a reply?"

"When a person replies to a call, the caller learns that his call was heard. But if no reply is given, the caller is inconvenienced

and has to call out a second and a third time. This inconvenience has to be borne solely because of your disregard and laziness because you did not reply verbally. What was so difficult about just saying "Yes"? Nowadays, various sciences are taught everywhere but the teaching of character is non-existent. I am now perturbed so I cannot teach you now. I will set aside some other time for you. You must bear this point in mind."

Interjecting a person's speech

I was teaching a seeker and had not finished my point as yet when he began relating his dream to me. I said: "What is this? I have not completed my point as yet and you are starting a new subject!"

> O intelligent fellow! A statement has a beginning and an end. Do not speak in-between.
>
> A man of planning, intelligence and understanding does not speak in-between.

By interjecting what I was teaching, it means that it was your objective to relate your dream to me and the teaching was just a waste of time according to you. It is as though all my teaching is gone to waste. Don't ever do this again. Now get up and leave, I will teach you at some other time. You have not appreciated my teaching at present.

Sitting near a person who is occupied in his work

I have learnt from experience that by sitting unnecessarily near a person who is busy in his work causes his heart to become occupied and bewildered. This is more so when a person sits near him and looks at him repeatedly. Be extremely cautious in this regard.

The gist of the above etiquette

The gist of all the above etiquette is that you must not place any burden, distress or constriction on another person through your words, actions or conditions. This is the essence of good character. The person who bears this rule in mind will not need too many details. This is why I did not increase this list. However, together with bearing this rule in mind, a person will have to do one additional thing, viz. before every action or statement, he must think to himself whether it will cause any

harm or not. If he does this, he will err very little. After a few days his temperament will automatically be set right and he will not even have to think before saying or doing anything because it will become like second nature to him.

A Few Etiquette From Bahishtī Zewar

Do not sit for longer than necessary

If you go to meet someone, do not sit there for so long nor speak for so long that the person gets fed up or is distracted from his work.

Reply to the one who issues an instruction

If a person asks you to carry out a certain task, you must certainly reply verbally in the affirmative or negative so that the person knows the exact position. Let it not happen that the speaker assumes that you heard what he said while you did not hear; or he assumes that you will carry out the task while you do not wish to carry it out. This will cause the person to rely on you unnecessarily.

Do not ask for anything from your host

When you go as a guest to any place, do not ask for anything. Sometimes the thing which you ask for maybe very insignificant but the host may not have it at that time and will not be able to fulfil your request. This would cause unnecessary embarrassment to the host.

Do not spit in the presence of others

Neither spit nor blow your nose if others are seated near you. If you have to do either of this, go to one side away from them and do it.

Do not speak of nauseating things

When eating, do not speak of things which would cause disgust to those who are seated. Some people of sensitive temperaments are severely affected by this.

Do not cause despair to a sick person

Do not speak before a sick person or to his family in a manner which would cause him or them to lose hope and break their heart unnecessarily. Instead, speak of things which would raise

their spirits. Allāh willing, all pain and affliction will be removed.

Do not speak through gestures

If you have to speak secretly about a third person and he is also present there, then do not speak by pointing at him with your hands or eyes. He will fall into unnecessary doubts. This only applies if what you are speaking about him is approved by the Sharīʿah. If it is not approved, then it is a sin to even start such a conversation.

Do not dirty your clothes

Do not allow a foul smell to develop on your body and clothes. If you do not have a set of fresh clothes which you can change into, wash the clothes which you are wearing.

Sweeping where people are seated

Do not sweep where others are sitting.

A guest must leave a little food

When a guest has eaten to his fill, he must certainly leave some food on the table so that the hosts do not assume that the food was insufficient. This would cause them embarrassment.

Do not block the path

Do not block a path with obstacles such as furniture, utensils, bricks, etc.

Do not ask about sores and pimples in private parts

Do not ask a person about sores, pimples, etc. which he has in private parts.

Be careful when throwing pits and seeds

Do not throw pits and seeds over a person [you could strike him with them].

Do not give an item by throwing it

If you have to give an item to a person in his hand, do not throw it from a distance. Go personally and give it in his hand.

Abstain from enquiring about a person's domestic matters

If you are not informal with a person, do not ask him about his domestic matters.

Do not spread sad news without verifying it

If you hear about a person's grief, worry or illness, do not convey it to others without verifying it first – especially to his relatives.

Do not carry away a dish for refilling

If there is a need for curry on the table, do not take away the dish in which the curry is for refilling. Bring another dish instead.

Speaking in the presence of children

Do not speak shameful things in the presence of children.

(A few etiquette from *Bahishtī Zewar* end here).

Etiquette For Seniors

Most of the etiquette up to this point applied to one's equals or one's seniors. I now list four etiquette which seniors have to bear in mind or are obligatory on them in their interaction with juniors.

Abstain from fastidiousness

Seniors must not be too fastidious and fussy whereby they become angry over trivial matters. Undoubtedly, just as others are unmannerly towards you, you too will commit certain misdemeanours if you were to live with your seniors. Bear this in mind and overlook. Explain to the juniors in a kind and affectionate manner one or two times. If this does not help, you may express your anger with the intention of their rectification. If you do not forbear and overlook in the least, you will forever be deprived of the reward of patience. Since Allāh *taʿālā* has appointed you as a senior, people from everywhere will revert to you and you will encounter people of different temperaments and various personalities. How can they all be equal at once? The following Hadīth ought to be borne in mind:

المؤمن الذي يخالط الناس ويصبر على اذاهم خير من الذي لا يخالط الناس ولا يصبر على اذاهم.

A believer who mixes with people and bears their offences patiently is better than the one who does not mix with people and does not bear their offences.

Do not impose the non-obligatory

If – from circumstantial information – you feel or are certain that a person will never pay heed to what you are to say to him, then never instruct him to do something which is not obligatory in the Sharīʿah.

Consider the comfort of attendants

If anyone serves you physically or monetarily even without your having asked for it, you must consider his comfort and do not allow any shortfall in whatever will be of use to him. In order words, do not allow him to remain awake for long periods of time, do not accept from him more than what he can afford, if he invites you then do not permit him to make too many preparations, do not allow him to invite too many others to the meal.

Strike a balance between severity and softness

If you have to express your displeasure to a person or this happens incidentally, then at some other time do something which would make him happy. If you have really wronged him, you must apologize for your transgression without hesitation and obtain his pardon. Do not consider this to be below your dignity. You and him will be equals on the day of Resurrection.

If you find your temperament changing in the course of conversing with a person who is very unmannerly, then do not converse with him directly. Call someone who is aware of temperaments and is rational, and converse with the person through him. You must do this so that the change in your temperament does not change and his unmannerly behaviour does not have an effect on you.

Do not make anyone your special confidant

Do not make any particular attendant or associate so close to you that others start snubbing him or he snubs others. Also, if he relates stories about people, you must stop him. If not, people will fear him and you will start having bad thoughts about people. Similarly, if he conveys a message on behalf of anyone or intercedes in favour of anyone, you must prohibit him severely. If not, people will start considering him to be an intermediary, they will start flattering him and giving him gifts or he himself will start making requests to them.

In short, all people must have direct contact with you, do not appoint anyone as your intermediary. Yes, you may specify one or two people to attend to you, that is another matter. However, you must never allow them to influence you in any way in your contacts with people. In the same way, do not leave the responsibility of seeing to guests to anyone. You must personally see to them. Although you will have to bear more fatigue, it will be to the people's advantage and their ease. Any way, seniors are there to bear fatigue and burdens. A poet rightly said:

> You do not know, the day when you become the moon, the fingers of the entire world will point towards you.

I now conclude these etiquette with a rule which is not based on principle. Some of the etiquette apply to everyone in every situation. There are others from which the informal one who is served and the attendant are excluded. Since the ascertainment of such a level of informality is based on sentiment and inclination, I am leaving the specification of such etiquette to sentiment and inclination. I now conclude this booklet with a couplet which combines both form and informal etiquette:

> The paths of love are etiquette. O friends! Teach yourselves etiquette.

Completed on 8 Muharram 1332 A.H. in Thānah Bhawan.

Miscellaneous Etiquette

Finally, I present a few miscellaneous social etiquette which I [the compiler of this biography] learnt from various sources.

The harm of mismanagement and disorder

Hadrat Wālā had given money to a person and asked him to buy āmlā (India gooseberry) jam for him. The lid of the jam can was also made of tin. The man mistakenly handed it to Hadrat Wālā while it was upside down. In other words, the lid-side was at the bottom. Hadrat Wālā took it and placed it in a cupboard as he received it. After some time, he noticed the cupboard and floor messed with syrup. When he checked carefully, he realized that the tin was placed upside down and that the lid side had a small hole from which the jam flowed out as a syrup. He was severely inconvenienced at having to clean the

cupboard and floor. Hadrat Wālā said in this regard: "First of all, the person who brought it should have shown me the right side of the can. If he did not do that, he should have at least turned it over and given it to me. Look at the damage caused by so little negligence. Every task – no matter how small – is in severe need of order and arrangement."

Hadrat Wālā says quite often: "The Sultanate which went out of the hands of the Muslims went out solely because of mismanagement and negligence. A kingdom can have unbelief but it can never have mismanagement."

Hadrat Wālā expresses a lot of remorse when he sees the mismanagement and disorder of the Muslims. He says: "Their misdeeds have caused Sultanate the to be taken away from them."

Character and etiquette take precedence over dhikr and spiritual practices

Hadrat Wālā says: "I do not pay as much attention to dhikr and spiritual practices as I do to rectification of character and etiquette. The reason for this is that the latter is connected to others [while dhikr is connected to the self]."

Writing titles

If a title is written out of pride – as is the case nowadays – then Hadrat Wālā draws attention to it and asks: "What benefit apart from pride is there in it?"

The harm of futile activities

Hadrat Wālā said: "I take an oath and say: If a person were to ponder over his futile activities he will realize that they certainly conveyed him towards sin. For example, I have personally experienced this: A person comes to me and asks me unnecessarily: 'When will you go to such and such place?' This question weighs heavily on me, and it is a sin to place a burden on a Muslim's heart. Even if the questioner is sincere, I feel burdened and think to myself: 'What right does he have to inquire about my personal actions?' In short, a futile activity certainly borders on sin. A futile activity may be lawful in the beginning, but its end is certainly a sin."

Asking one's students to carry out certain tasks

If Hadrat Wālā asks a student of the Madrasah to carry out a short, insignificant but essential task for him during class

time, he says to the student: “You must certainly take permission from your teacher before doing it.”

Messages to women must be conveyed via their mahrams

Hadrat Wālā strictly forbids a woman attendant conveying any item or note to him even if it is sent by a woman. Instead, it must be given in the presence of the husband who will then convey it as he wills. If the husband is not at home, it must be conveyed by one of the woman’s Mahram males. In the same way, the reply must also come via the husband or Mahram.

There are countless other social etiquette which Hadrat Wālā teaches by day and night. How much more can I write on this subject?

WRITTEN WORKS

Comprehensiveness Of His Written Works

By the help and grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā has authored 666 books up to now. The list of these books are attached towards the end of this biography. There were scholars in the past who authored a similar number of books. There is no essential department of Dīn on which Hadrat Wālā did not author a book and on which he did not investigate and research thoroughly. It is normally the task of a Mujaddid to remove every evil which the people have initiated and to display Dīn in its original form.

I'lā' As-Sunan

Hadrat Wālā wrote books on tasawwuf, tafsīr, Hadīth, jurisprudence, scholastic theology, tajwīd – basically, on all departments of Dīn. However, he did not devote himself directly to Hadīth. The reason for this is that when he turned his attention to compiling a book which provided Hadīth proofs for all chapters of Hanafī jurisprudence – and also wrote, as a way of example, a book on this subject, *Jāmiʿ al-Āthār maʿa Hāshiyah Tābiʿ al-Āthār* – then a short time later he found others who could take up this task. Thus, *Iʿlā' as-Sunan* whose first volume was titled *Ihyā' as-Sunan* was written under his supervision. He personally checked through it and made necessary corrections. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this is continuing to the present day. Had he not found others to take up this task, he had certainly made an intention to serve this most important subject. He considers it extremely important and essential, and has already spent thousands of rupees towards it. He has been devoting a lot of time to it since a long time. He says quite often: "If no other work is done in this Madrasah and just this one book is prepared, it will be a phenomenal achievement of this Madrasah because it is a totally new book on the subject."

Special Inclination Towards Tasawwuf And Tafsīr

Hadrat Wālā has particular affinity with tasawwuf, tafsīr and logic, and has the highest level of expertise in these fields. As for his affinity with tasawwuf and tafsīr, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

rahimahullāh had given him specific glad tidings in this regard at the very beginning of his journey. Mention was made of this in the chapter on bayʿah. This glad tiding proved to be absolutely true by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Uniqueness Of His Written Works

Pick up any of Hadrat Wālā's books and start studying them from one side and you will find Dīnī facts clarified to you as clear as the day, and you will experience inner satisfaction.

Completeness Of Subject Matter

When Hadrat Wālā picks up his pen to write on a certain subject, he does not allow any essential aspect of it to be overlooked. He presents a complete and fully proven discussion. His proofs are authentic, strong, rational and traditional, after which, an intelligent and justice-seeking person will have to accept and will not have the slightest room to make any objections. His tone is so non-confrontational and loving that the themes continue settling in the heart as the reader continues reading. Hadrat Wālā himself gives a reason for this: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, my intention from the very beginning is to write the most truthful points and this is what I do. That is why they generally appeal to the hearts. After all, a Hadīth states:

الصدق طمأنينة والكذب ريبة

Truthfulness is tranquillity and falsehood is doubtfulness.

General Acceptance

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's written works enjoy general acceptance which is rarely found in the written works of an author while he is still alive. Consequently, some of his books have been printed by the hundreds of thousands and are still being printed, and spreading to the East and West. Some of his books are found in every home, even in the homes of his opponents. Some are being translated into different languages, others are being printed as selections, and yet others are being arranged into chapters. Details in this regard are obvious from the attention which scholars are giving to his works. These are provided towards the end of this biography. Many scholars became excellent authors through the written works of Hadrat Wālā. The arrangement and composition of his statements have

been penned with so much dedication and are still being penned that an example of this cannot be found for several centuries in the past. Any word which issues from his mouth is considered to be worthy of being written in gold.

The fact of the matter is that even when Hadrat Wālā makes an ordinary statement and says something by the way, it is filled with sciences and facts and is worthy of being written in gold. Most of his ordinary conversations are also related to Dīn or have a Dīnī angle to them.

I recall a very old statement of Hadrat Wālā on the general acceptance of his written works. It was a very long time ago when he was talking about the antagonistic attitudes and practices of his opponents. He went into a fervour and said: "All the enemies may make their own efforts, you will see that – Allāh willing – my books will proliferate and spread to such an extent that no one will be able to stop their proliferation."

Subsequently, this is exactly what happened. I recall my own couplets on this subject:

> All those who try to wipe out the truth will be wiped out themselves. They can make thousands of efforts, your chronicle will not be wiped out.
>
> The spot on the heart will glitter and become like the sun even if thousands of dust particles are cast on it.

Lives Are Revolutionized By His Written Works

There are thousands of incidents and testimonies to the general acceptance and complete benefit of Hadrat Wālā's written works. These cannot be encompassed. Every day Hadrat Wālā receives letters from new seekers, all of whom write about how their lives changed completely from his books. The atheistic beliefs of many Western educated people were rectified and they became genuine Muslims to the extent that some of them were conferred with khilāfat by Hadrat Wālā. Many fashion worshippers became Allāh worshippers and adopted Islamic clothing from head to toe. Many of those who were engrossed in innovations and customs gave up the ways of their forefathers without even bothering about the opposition of their families and relatives. In fact, many of them left their previous mentors and reverted to Hadrat Wālā. I personally

saw many non-Muslims and people belonging to deviated sects applauding Hadrat Wālā's discussions and requesting his books with absolute enthusiasm. As the saying goes:

الفضل ما شهدت به الأعداء

Virtue lies in what enemies testify to.

Benefit Of His Mawā'iz

An extremist bidʿatī Maulānā who was an arch enemy of Hadrat Wālā came across an article of Hadrat Wālā on the subject of the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He read the article before realizing that it was written by Hadrat Wālā and praised it highly saying: "It has been written by a true lover of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and an erudite scholar." But he fell silent when he was informed that it was written by Hadrat Wālā. Some deviated Sufis who – Allāh forbid – did not consider salāh to be essential began performing their salāh after reading Hadrat Wālā's published lecture, *Rūh al-Arwāh*. I personally saw many people affected by Hadrat Wālā's published lectures titled *Rāhat al-Qulūb* and *Tarīq al-Qalandar* when these were read to them. Not only Muslims, even non-Muslims were impressed by them. A materialist lecturer memorized a few of Hadrat Wālā's lectures and he used to say: "May Allāh *taʿālā* bless him [Hadrat Wālā] because my income has been taken care of. I deliver these lectures wherever I go. I receive many gifts and people think that I am a senior scholar." Rarely would you find a house not having *Bahishtī Zewar* and *Munājāt Maqbūl*.

Tafsīr Bayān Al-Qur'ān

Hadrat Wālā's commentary of the Qur'ān, *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, is considered to be unparalleled. Nowadays, it is Hadrat Wālā's translation of the Qur'ān which is by and large printed with the pocket Qur'āns. Hadrat Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib [Kashmīrī] *rahimahullāh* was well-known for his erudition and deep knowledge. He used to say: "I developed an interest in reading Urdu books after reading *Bayān al-Qur'ān*. Previously, I felt that Urdu books did not contain lofty sciences." Presently, a very learned scholar is translating the Qur'ān into English. He has most of the former and latter commentaries of the Qur'ān before him. He constantly writes to Hadrat Wālā and sings praises about *Bayān al-Qur'ān*. He writes: "I did not benefit

from any commentary of the Qur'ān as much as I benefited from *Bayān al-Qur'ān*."

In short, the general acceptance and perfect benefit of Hadrat Wālā's written works are well-known and acknowledged in our times. If anyone did not get an opportunity of reading any of his books may do so now and he too will acknowledge it. I have experienced it in the course of compiling this biography – *Ashraf as-Sawānih* – that if I coincidentally came across any writing of Hadrat Wālā, I found it filled with jewels of facts and realities. I say with absolute confidence that any person who studies Hadrat Wālā's writings with reflection, understanding and an open mind, he will find every work as I found it [i.e. filled with jewels of facts and realities] and will become of us. I compiled a couplet in this regard:

> The one who reads your letter of yearning with reflection will find a book hidden in every word.

May Allāh *taʿālā* confer every Muslim with the enthusiasm to acquire Dīn and inspire every Muslim to benefit from Hadrat Wālā's written works as he ought to. Āmīn.

Most Important Written Works

Every book of Hadrat Wālā is extremely beneficial and essential, however there are a few which hold a distinguished position because of the peculiar qualities which they contain. For example, *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān, Kalīd Mathnawī, Qasd as-Sabīl, Tarbīyyatus Sālik, Islāh Inqilāb, Hayāt al-Muslimīn, al-Intihibāt al-Mufīdah, Ahkām al-Ītilāf, Masā'il as-Sulūk, at-Takashshuf, at-Tasharruf, Nashr at-Tīb, at-Tanbīh at-Tabarī, as-Sunnah al-Jalīyyah, Akhbār Baynī, Sajjādah Nashīnī, Talyīn al-ʿArā'ik, Bawādir an-Nawādir, al-Iqtisād fī at-Taqlīd wa al-Ijtihād, al-Iʿtidāl fī Mutābaʿatir Rijāl* and others.

The Acceptance Of Bahishtī Zewar

The divinely inspired general acceptance which Hadrat Wālā's books enjoy is absolutely clear and do not need any explanation. Just look at *Bahishtī Zewar* alone. It has been printed by the hundreds of thousands and is found in almost every home. In his introduction to the book, Hadrat Wālā had expressed his desire in this regard [that it be in every home] and Allāh *taʿālā* fulfilled this desire of his.

Janāb Maulānā ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Gamthalwī relates a dream of a righteous man with regard to the acceptance of this book in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā*. The Maulānā's article in this regard is quoted verbatim:

> Janāb Maulwī Rustam ʿAlī Sāhib of Malānpūr, district Ambālah related to me - ʿAbd al-Karīm - on several occasions that quite some time ago (probably in 1328 A.H. or slightly before that) my brother, Hājī Rahmatullāh Sāhib related in my presence to Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* saying: A few days ago I had a dream in which I saw an extremely exotic garden. People said to me that Hadrat Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* has arrived in this garden. I entered the garden and tried to present myself before Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. However, the doorman did not permit me to go beyond the door of his blessed room. I tried to enter from another door but a doorman was also there. I eventually remained standing at the entrance and continued looking at Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He was promulgating laws while his attendants were presenting pieces of paper to him. When they finally stopped presenting the pieces of paper to him, he looked up and his blessed gaze fell on me. He said with much affection to the doormen: "Explain to him in the Urdu language." They picked up some of those pieces of paper which were in front of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and gave them to me. I am illiterate so I could not read them. I turned the papers around and looked at them carefully. Some of the writing was in a large script while some was in a small script. However, I studied them deeply until the images on the pages were imprinted in my mind. My eyes opened after that. I looked at some books (I, ʿAbd al-Karīm, cannot recall if Hājī Rahmatullāh Sāhib looked at the books wittingly or happened to see them incidentally). When my eyes fell on *Bahishtī Zewar*, I immediately recognized it to be the same book. I asked someone to read it to me and I understood it very well."
>
> Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* said: "It is a blessed dream and is proof of the acceptance of *Bahishtī*

> *Zewar*. Allāh willing, you will be blessed with an opportunity of visiting the Haramayn Sharīfayn."
>
> Maulwī Rustam ʿAlī Sāhib relates: A few days later my brother was given the opportunity of visiting the Haramayn Sharīfayn in the company of Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh*. He is extremely enthusiastic about having *Bahishtī Zewar* read to him. Because he has heard it so many times, he has memorized all the rules and regulations explained in the book and understands them very well. Although he cannot read it himself, he constantly teaches it to the boys and girls in the family.

Blessings In Hadrat Wālā's Time

Allāh *taʿālā* conferred Hadrat Wālā with the highest level of writing ability from the very beginning. When he was still a student and only 18 years old, he wrote *Mathnawī Zer wa Bumm* in the Persian language. Hadrat Wālā's numerous written works received divine assistance right from the beginning. Consequently, when he was living in the service of his shaykh and mentor, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he undertook the Urdu translation of *Kitāb Tanwīr* of Hadrat Ibn ʿAtā' Iskandarī *rahimahullāh* under the suggestion of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. This translation is titled *Iksīr fī Ithbāt at-Taqdīr*. This work was written in 1312 A.H. When Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* saw him doing so much of work in so little time, he gave him the following glad tiding: "Allāh *taʿālā* has placed blessing in your time." One undoubtedly sees a lot of blessing in Hadrat Wālā's time. Most experienced people acknowledge that the work which he carries out in a certain time cannot be accomplished by others.

Reasons For Blessings In His Time

Perseverance

There are a few external reasons for this divine help. The first reason is that when he commences with a task, his heart develops an extremely strong demand to complete it to the extent that he cannot rest until it is completed. Apart from other essential matters, he remains fully absorbed in it by day and night and only takes a breather when he completes it. I clearly remember when he was approaching the completion of

the commentary of *Kalīd Mathnawī*, he developed such an imposing demand on his self to complete it that he spent his entire day and whole night writing. He did not sleep for a single minute and continued writing until he completed it just before fajr. He said: "I never had the occasion of remaining awake the entire night before this. I now have a fever because I bore fatigue against my norm. However, even in this fever I am experiencing a type of tranquillity because it came after completing my task."

Although the demand to complete his tasks is an innate quality in Hadrat Wālā, there is also a special reason behind it. He says in this regard: "I like to keep my heart empty all the time so that if I get the inspiration to turn towards Allāh *taʿālā*, there is no obstacle and my heart is able to turn to Him easily."

Presence Of Sciences

The second form of divine help is that when Hadrat Wālā writes on a subject he does not have to think too much about it. I saw his pen flowing when writing even very complex matters. Although he makes many additions and alterations in the course of writing and after writing, he says in this regard: "Because of the many additions and alterations in my manuscripts, most of them appeared very unclear and I considered this to be a defect in me. However, I heard the statement of an expert who said that this is not a defect but an accomplishment because it is an indication of a working mind. It shows that the mind is working a lot and is not stopping at any point. Instead, it is progressing and moving ahead."

Safeguarded Against obstacles

The third reason for blessings in his time is that he is safeguarded against obstacles. Hadrat Wālā says: "It took me about two and half years to write *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān*. My ears never got heated in the course of this time although there were many plagues here during that period." Hadrat Wālā also says: "There was a severe plague in the town during the time when I was writing the *Tafsīr*. I made duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā*: 'O Allāh! Allow me to live until I have completed the *Tafsīr*.' Consequently, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, not even my ears got heated. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the *Tafsīr* was completed." Hadrat Wālā had also stopped journeying during this period.

I recall one other incident which portrays how he was safeguarded against obstacles. He received almost fifty letters on one occasion. The railway times had changed so he used to receive the post very late after the zuhr salāh. This resulted in having very little time to write the replies. This is how Allāh *taʿālā* helped him on that day: While writing the replies, no one came to him to ask for taʿwīdh or to make other requests. Normally, while he is replying to letters there is a constant movement of people coming to him for various reasons. Moreover, we noticed very often that when he had to check certain references in certain books, he would find them very easily. He did not have to search too much.

One day while he was writing the commentary to *Mathnawī*, he needed to find out about a certain terminology or general habit of pigeon trainers. Hadrat Wālā was perplexed as to where he will find a pigeon trainer whom he could ask. Incidentally a man came and asked Hadrat Wālā for a taʿwīdh. He knew that the man was a pigeon trainer so he asked him about the terminology. That particular place in the *Mathnawī* was immediately solved. Hadrat Wālā made mention of this incident at that place in the commentary.

Abstaining from extremism

The fourth reason for Hadrat Wālā's numerous written works is his abstention from extremism. Janāb Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* the former deputy principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband expressed his opinion in this regard. Hadrat Wālā quotes his opinion and says: "He is absolutely right. No work can be accomplished with excessive head scratching. My gaze is focused solely on what is necessary. Too much of investigating and researching confuses the heart. This is why my words are very concise but absolutely sufficient and clear to express my point. I never lengthen a point unnecessarily. But if there is a need to go at length for the sake of clarity, then I do not abstain from going at length."

Noting down points

During those days when Hadrat Wālā used to do a lot of writing, he used to keep a pencil and paper with him. Whenever any point came to his mind, he would note it down immediately. In fact, there were times when he used to place a pencil and paper under his pillow when he went to sleep at

night so that if any point or idea comes to his mind, he would put on the lamp immediately and note it down.

If, during the days when he was writing part ten of *Bahishtī Zewar* which contains some of the ills and bad habits of women, he happened to go to any person's house and came across any bad habit committed by the women there, he would note it immediately in his diary. Similarly, his mind is not unoccupied when he goes for his walks. He is engrossed in thinking about difficult issues and rulings, and when he works out any point, he notes it immediately in his diary so that it does not disappear from his mind. In fact, there were times when he returned from the fields especially for this reason, i.e. to make a note of a point. He would then go back to the fields to complete his walk.

Another reason for noting such points down is that Hadrat Wālā never places any unnecessary burden on his brains to remember any point or matter, and does not defer any task for a later time. He says: "I don't defer a task to another time. I do it immediately even if I have to bear some inconvenience at the time of carrying it out. Once it is completed, I feel absolutely free and unburdened. I then experience a lot of comfort. If I did not do this, most procrastinated work would have remained unfinished. I remain worried all the time until it is completed. Whatever time passes in this way passes in worry. Why, then, should a short inconvenience not be tolerated? Even if a short while is found for rest after its completion, that time will be spent in rest and absence of worry. This will bring peace to the mind and joy to the heart."

When Hadrat Wālā relates these practices which are related to his written works, he says: "If a servant of Dīn were to occupy himself in earning a livelihood under such conditions, how will he able to serve Dīn?"

Following a strict time-table

The fifth reason for Hadrat Wālā's numerous written works and blessings in his time is that he is very particular about adhering to his times. He says: "Had I not stuck to a strict time-table, the little service of Dīn which I could do would never have been accomplished." The following incident portrays how strict he was in this regard: Hadrat Wālā's respected teacher Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* arrived

as a guest of Hadrat Wālā so he made all the necessary arrangements for his comfort and rest. When the time for his writing work arrived, he respectfully sought permission from his teacher and became occupied in his writing work. He could not concentrate so he stopped after a while and presented himself before his teacher once again. However, he did not leave out his work completely.

Obtaining Books For His Written Works

Hadrat Wālā says: "In the course of writing some of my books, I needed to obtain other books to find out just one small point. Such books were obtained from other places at great cost and with a lot of care. Once I noted just that small point from them, I would return them immediately. A person will read this small point and continue, but he does not know how much of effort was put into writing it. When writing *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān* there were certain places which needed deep thought and reflection. I would go for a walk for quite some time, think and ponder over the point, and make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Only then would I be satisfied. As for some of the places where I was not satisfied, I expressed it clearly and said: 'If a better explanation is found elsewhere, it must be selected.'" There are two such places in the *Tafsīr*, one in Sūrah al-Barā'ah and the other in Sūrah al-Hashr. This is one of the special and peculiar qualities of Hadrat Wālā. Most scholars consider it below their dignity to admit their incapability and deficiency.

Searching For Support From Past Scholars

Hadrat Wālā says: "When writing *Bayān al-Qur'ān* I made it a point of only writing what I personally understood. However, I was not satisfied with it until I found support for it from the commentaries of the pious predecessors." In this regard, the commentary may seem to have been taken from the commentaries of past scholars but in reality it is solely and entirely Hadrat Wālā's commentary. A lot of time went in adhering to this principle and many commentaries had to be checked at every step of the way. Those who read *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān* are not even aware of this. If Hadrat Wālā did not find any support for his explanation from the commentaries of past scholars despite searching for it, he wrote his explanation and then added: "This is from the knowledge which was bestowed to me [by Allāh *ta'ālā*]."

Hayāt al-Muslimīn

Hadrat Wālā made an all out effort to write in a very clear, flowing and comprehensive style when writing *Hayāt al-Muslimīn*. He says in this regard: "I do not think I had to bear as much fatigue in any of my other books. This was the only book – most of whose subject matter is titled *Rūh* – for which I had to prepare two manuscripts for some topics, and three manuscripts for other topics."

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to this book: "People do not look at it in this way, but it is so beneficial and sufficient for the physical and spiritual success of the Muslims that I – Allāh willing – expect forgiveness as a reward for writing it."

Worldly Benefits Must Not Be Attached To Written Works

Hadrat Wālā fulfilled the right of every book, and that too, solely for Allāh's pleasure. He never acquired any type of worldly benefit from any of his written works. In fact, after a book was printed, he did not even expect to receive a copy of it. It was therefore far-fetched for him to lay down such a condition. However, if anyone presented a copy out of love to him, he did not refuse to accept it. Hadrat Wālā gives an open permission to print any of his books in any quantity. Printers and publishers made hundreds of thousands of rupees from printing Hadrat Wālā's books, and the livelihoods of many are running through his books.

An Englishman Is Astonished

An Englishman asked Hadrat Wālā: "How many rupees did you receive for writing your *Tafsīr*." When Hadrat Wālā informed him that he did not receive any money, the man was astonished and said: "Why, then, did you work so hard in writing this book?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "We believe in a life after this life. I will receive its recompense in that life. There is also a worldly benefit in it, viz. when I see my fellow Muslims reading it and benefiting from it, it will bring joy to me."

Hadrat Wālā's reply had a special effect on the Englishman. His demeanour showed that it made a great impact on his heart.

The Issue Of Copyrights

Hadrat Wālā wrote books solely as a service to Dīn and purely for the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*. His objective is to spread and

proliferate Dīn. This is why he neither registered any of his books himself nor did he permit anyone to do so. To register one's books or have them registered is absolutely impermissible in the Sharīʿah. Consequently, based on a Sharʿī need, Hadrat Wālā made an announcement in this regard and had it published and printed in Jumādā al-Ūlā 1335 A.H. It is quoted here to serve as a general information.

> No copyright and any other such right is taken from anyone here. Therefore no one has the right to have any book registered. That is all. 1st Jumādā al-Ūlā 1335 A.H.

This insignificant servant [the compiler is referring to himself] makes the same announcement in emulation of Hadrat Wālā with regard to this work, *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. I wrote this book solely for Allāh's pleasure with the intention of benefiting the general public and without any recompense. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless me with sincerity, accept this work and make it beneficial. I give an open permission to anyone who wishes to print it. I do not give anyone the right to reserve any printing and publishing rights. Instead, I desire for as many printers and non-printers to publish and print this book so that it may proliferate far and wide, and its benefit may reach everyone completely. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Printing A List Of His Written Works

As is the case with other essential matters, Hadrat Wālā is extremely cautious and particular about his written works. He makes it a point of noting down every written work whether big or small in his diary. He also has the list published periodically. Apart from the benefit of having a complete list, a major wisdom behind this is that no one can attribute a book wrongfully to him. Hadrat Wālā also published a general announcement stating: "Any manuscript which does not have my signature or does not have any changes and alterations made in my handwriting should not be considered to be mine."

Retracting From Slip Ups

The greatest precaution which is from among Hadrat Wālā's supreme qualities is that if he comes to know – either by himself or from others – of any incidental slip ups in any of his writings, he retracts from them and also publishes his

retraction. He gave his retractions the title of *Tarjīh ar-Rājih* and continues to this day. Once Hadrat Wālā is convinced of his lapse, he reverts from it. If he is still in doubt about it, he writes a reply to it and adds: "Other ʿulamā' should also be consulted." A Maulānā related to me a statement of Hadrat Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib [Kashmīrī] *rahimahullāh* in this regard. He said: "*Tarjīh ar-Rājih* is a completely new phenomenon of our times. It was practised by the pious predecessors. It is sufficient to demonstrate the distinguished position, perfect integrity and sincerity of Maulānā Thānwī (Hadrat Wālā)."

Hadrat Wālā also had certain distinguished scholars to check his written works – *Bahishtī Zewar, Imdād al-Fatāwā* and *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān*. When he was convinced of any slip ups, he had them corrected in the original and had them published.

In short, Hadrat Wālā is extremely cautious about any of his writing causing harm and misunderstanding to anyone at any time. Consequently, his booklet on his bequests contains a section on his written works. One may refer to it.

A few peculiar qualities of Hadrat Wālā's written works are also mentioned in the list of his books which is attached towards the end of this book.

Hadrat Wālā's Letters

Apart from the writings which have been published, there are thousands of Hadrat Wālā's letters in the hands of seekers. Although they are not published, they also contain many important themes. I witnessed this on numerous occasions and found each letter to be like a book on its own. However, since it was impossible to copy and preserve every single letter, general benefit could not be derived from them. Anyway, whatever has been preserved is a boon in itself. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Hadrat Wālā with the best of rewards, may he be able to guide the Muslim community for a long time, may the blessings of his written works continue until the day of Resurrection, and may Allāh *taʿālā* enable the Muslims to benefit from them.

آمين، بحرمة سيد المرسلين صلى الله عليه و على آله وأصحابه وأزواجه وذرياته وأتباعه أجمعين.

ELUCIDATION OF KASHF AND KARĀMAT

H̲ad̲rat Wālā Denies Being A Man Of Kashf

The general trend is to include a chapter on the kashf and karāmat of the one whose biography is written. I too felt the same way. I and a few friends also know of certain incidents which could have been easily included under this chapter as is the trend with contemporary biographers. However, when I mentioned this to the one whose biography I am writing [i.e. H̲ad̲rat Wālā], he objected very strongly.

He took an oath and said: "I do not know of a single incident which could be referred to as a kashf or a karāmat. A major cause for assuming something to be a kashf is that some people come here with a certain idea in their heart and they get an answer for it before they can express it to me. However, the reality of it is that Allāh *taʿālā* knows when a certain person speaks and gives an answer to it [the doubt in the person's heart], then the one in whose heart was a doubt is pacified and consoled. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* instils the answer in the heart of the one who is going to give the answer. The answer is then expressed by his tongue. So this is not kashf about what we are speaking at present. It is only kashf when the answerer is also informed that the questioner has a certain doubt in his heart. And I do not have knowledge of this, so it is not kashf."

H̲ad̲rat Wālā Denies Being A Man Of Karāmat

Similarly, certain incidents which we consider to be karāmat were mentioned before H̲ad̲rat Wālā. He replied by referring to some of them as coincidental matters, results of foresight, correct temperament, fathomed by the intelligence, or the results of experience. As regards something which is fathomed by the intelligence, he quoted a statement of Amīr ʿAbd ar-Rah̲mān Khān S̲āh̲ib Marh̲ūm, the governor of Kabul: "A matter which is learnt through kashf can be fathomed by the intellect as well. The only difference is that kashf is like a telephone from which the exact words are heard while the intellect is like a telegraph wherein one's rational and intellectual powers are utilized because the exact words are not heard [in the case of a telegraph], rather, the conversation is through gestures via the knocking sound of the telegraph."

Similarly, Hadrat Wālā referred to some of the incidents as a benefaction from Allāh *taʿālā* which is more general than a karāmat. A presence of a general incident does not necessarily make it a karāmat, only a special or specific incident can be referred to as such. Hadrat Wālā also said that it is not necessary for the person performing the karāmat to be aware of it. This is why not having knowledge of it does not necessarily entail denial of a karāmat. At the same time, it does not necessarily entail the existence of a karāmat. Thus, the most which can be said in this regard is that the possibility of a karāmat is established. Therefore, the realization of a karāmat is not certain. This is the purpose of denying it. It is prohibited to claim the certainty of a matter without proof based on the verse:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ

Do not pursue anything of which you have no knowledge.[1]

The Position Of Kashf And Karāmat

Hadrat Wālā also said: "If I was really a man of kashf and karāmat I would have admitted it because it is not from among the objectives nor a thing of virtue. The elders have said that the position of karāmat is even lower than verbal dhikr. Thus, a person claiming to be a man of karāmat or admitting that he is one is similar to a person saying that his eyes have the power of seeing and his ears have the power of hearing. Instead, rejecting it entails ingratitude and denial of a bounty."

When we related some incidents which we assumed to be karāmat to Hadrat Wālā and he gave an explanation for them, then some of us said to him: "This is even greater than a karāmat." He replied: "Then you too possess something which is greater than karāmat, i.e. īmān. Why do you not include it among your virtues? Yes, you count it among the blessings of Allāh *taʿālā*, and I too permit you to include them [the incidents which you refer to as karāmat] among the blessings of Allāh *taʿālā*."

He also said: "Since we have established that kashf and karāmat are neither proven nor virtuous, the ruling as regards tasarruf will be more applicable, i.e. ignorance about it

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[1] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 36.

certainly entails its denial. This is because an intent and knowledge are from among the essentials of tasarruf. So if a person denies an intent and knowledge of it, its occurrence will automatically be denied. Moreover, it is also found among those who are on falsehood. And this in itself denies its virtue."

Hadrat Wālā says very often: "Nowadays people include every strange thing about their shaykh as a karāmat, whereas every strange thing cannot be a karāmat. Rather, a karāmat is an extraordinary event regarding which one can never say that it is caused by some natural cause. So much so, there is no possibility of the spiritual master exercising his influence over it."

A Written Statement

The above are Hadrat Wālā's verbal statements wherein he denied having any kashf and karāmat. I now quote one of his writings in this regard which I coincidentally came across in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.

A shaykh who belonged to another spiritual lineage was suffering from a confused heart. He described his spiritual problems, especially an inundation of troublesome thoughts which hurt him severely. He also wrote in this regard: "One day I was inundated by these thoughts. I turned towards Hadrat Wālā and was overcome by a drowning condition. I heard Hadrat's consoling words – not with the ears of my heart but with my external ears, totally on the surface. I was not dreaming, I was taking a walk at the time. I experienced tranquillity instantly, smiled involuntarily, and said to those who were present: 'I clearly heard Hadrat speaking now. He is giving a comforting and solacing speech about me.' One day while I was in the maghrib salāh, I clearly saw the blessed image of Hadrat Wālā in the first sajdah. I saw it with my eyes open."

Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Incidents of this nature are sometimes the influences of one's imagination, and sometimes Allāh *taʿālā* displays an unseen subtlety in the image of a known person in order to bring solace to the person without the person whose image was shown even knowing about it. However, there are times when incidents of this nature occur – as supernatural events - with the knowledge of the person whose image was shown and sometimes they occur wittingly.

However, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that I do not possess the rank of performing supernatural acts. Each of the above two situations are possible in your case and each of them is a type of divine steering for you.”

Elucidation Of Kashf And Karāmat

As per the instruction of Hadrat Wālā, instead of writing on kashf and karāmat in this biography, a chapter on the elucidation of kashf and karāmat has been written. Instead of relating incidents which portray kashf and karāmat, Hadrat Wālā’s elucidation and clarification of this subject has been provided. This point is one of the peculiarities of this biography and one of the special terminologies of Hadrat Wālā from which biographers must take a lesson.

Hadrat Wālā’s Spiritual Karāmāt

Special attention has been given in this biography to present Hadrat Wālā’s very powerful and undeniable spiritual karāmāt and to relate incidents in this regard. These include his renovation of the Muslim nation, its rectification and his extraordinary steadfastness. As the saying goes:

الإستقامة فوق الكرامة

Steadfastness supersedes karāmat.

As for the incidents which are normally related under the chapter on kashf and karāmāt, some of them will – Allāh willing – be related to serve as examples in the next chapter titled Divine Blessings.

Spiritual Karāmāt Supersede Physical Karāmāt

The superiority of spiritual karāmāt over physical karāmāt is an accepted fact according to all erudite scholars. Hadrat Shaykh Akbar *rahimahullāh* writes about karāmāt in chapter 184 of his *Futūhāt*:

وهي على قسمين: حسية ومعنوية، فالعامة ما تعرف من الكرامة إلا الحسية مثل الكلام على الخاطر والأخبار بالمغيبات الماضية والكائنة والآتية، والأخذ عن الكون، والمشي على الماء، وإخراق الهواء، وطي الأرض، والإحتجاب عن الأبصار، وإجابة الدعاء. فالعامة لا يعرف الكرامة إلا مثل هذا.

وأما الكرامة المعنوية فلا يعرفها إلا الخواص من عباد الله. والعامة لا يعرف ذلك. هي أن تحفظ على آداب الشريعة وأن يوفق لإتيان مكارم الأخلاق واجتناب سفسافها ولمحافظة على أداء الواجبات مطلقا في أوقاتها، والمسارعة إلى الخيرات، وإزالة الغل للناس من صدره، والحسد والحقد وسوء الظن، وطهارة القلب من كل صفة مذمومة، وتحلية بالمراقبة مع الأنفاس، ومراعات حقوق الغير في نفسه وفي الأشياء، وتفقد آثار ربه في قلبه، ومراعات أنفاسه في خروجها ودخولها، فيتلقاها بالأدب إذا وردت عليه ويحرجها عليه خلعته الحضور. فهذه كلها عندنا كرامات الأولياء المعنوية التي لا يدخلها مكر واستدراج. فإن ذلك كله دليل على الوفاء بالعهود وصحة المقصود والرضا بالقضاء في عدم المطلوب ووجود المكروه، والا يشاركك في هذه الكرامة إلا الملائكة المقربون وأهل الله المصطفون الأخيار. وأما الكرامة التي ذكرنا أن العامة يعرفها فكلها يمكن أن يدخلها المكر الخصي. ثم إذا فرضناها كرامة فلا بد أن تكون نتيجة استقامة أو ينج استقامته لا بد من ذلك، وإلا ليست بكرامة. وإذا كانت الكرامة تنتج استقامة فقد يمكن أن يجعلها الله حظ عملك وجزاء فعلك، فإذا قدمت عليه يمكن أن يحاسبك بها. وما ذكرنا من الكرامة المعنوية فلا يدخلها شيء مما ذكرناه.

He writes a few lines further:

فأنفس ما أكرمهم الله به من الكرامات العلم خاصة.

سئل أبو يزيد عن طي الأرض، فقال: ليس بشيء فإن إبليس يقطع من المشرق إلى المغرب في لحظة واحدة وما هو عند الله بمكان. وسئل عن إخراق الهواء، فقال: إن الطير يخرق الهواء والمؤمن عند الله أفضل من الطير، فكيف يحسب كرامة من يشاركه فيها طائر. وهكذا علل جميع ما ذكر له. ثم قال: إلٰهي إن قوما طلبوك بما ذكروه فشغلتهم به وأهلتهم له، اللّٰهُمَّ إن أهلتني بشيء فأهلني بشيء من أشيائك، أي من أسرارك. فما طلب إلا العلم لأنه أسنى تحفة وأعظم كرامة.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, H̲ad̲rat Wālā is – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – also honoured by all the spiritual karāmāt which H̲ad̲rat Shaykh Akbar *rah̲imahullāh* made mention of in the above texts. This biography – *Ashraf as-Sawānih̲* – is filled with details in this regard. H̲ad̲rat Wālā's most distinguishing karāmāt are his Dīnī services which are far superior to physical karāmāt and much more beneficial – for others and for H̲ad̲rat Wālā himself. The benefit for others is obvious because a large number of Allāh's creation is receiving Dīnī benefit from his services. This service is not little but countless as attested to by

the many letters which he receives from seekers, and in which they express this to Hadrat Wālā. It is more beneficial than physical karāmāt for Hadrat Wālā himself because those services would earn him rewards and proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*. As for physical karāmāt, they do not result in proximity. Yes, in some instances, the performance of karāmāt is as a result of the proximity. The karāmāt of the spiritual masters are of this category.

Anyway, physical karāmāt do not necessitate proximity although they may stem from proximity. In fact, some masters who performed karāmāt expressed the wish that they should not have been able to perform them while others made duʿā' that the performance of karāmāt from them must terminate because there are certain tribulations in them, e.g. self-conceit, popularity, crowds of people and so on. This is why when Hadrat Wālā replied to a shaykh in the letter which was quoted previously, he said to him: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I do not possess the rank of performing supernatural acts."

I read the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* on the subject of not possessing anything:

> All the seeds which deceive the heart have adorned jewellery. This is our beloved who has come with Allāh-bestowed beauty.

I also read the following couplet:

> A beautiful face has no need whatsoever for water, colour, and other artificial forms of beautification.

In short, this biography does not have any chapter on kashf and karāmat, and the reasons for it were given above. The absence of this chapter and the difference between physical and spiritual karāmāt bring to my mind a couplet of Hadrat Jāmī *rahimahullāh*. I conclude this chapter with it.

> O leader! A tale has been related by relating some of
> the karāmāt of the shaykh of this city.

DIVINE BENEFACTIONS

The Focus Of Hadrat Wālā's Associates

As promised in the previous chapter, I will relate a few incidents which people consider to be kashf and karāmat when in actual fact, as per the statement of Hadrat Wālā, they are not part of kashf and karāmat. They are merely incidental matters or based on foresight and sound temperament, or solely parts of divine benefactions. Details in this regard were provided in the previous chapter.

However, the fact of the matter is that the associates of Hadrat Wālā never looked at him as such because through his blessed company, they have all been taught and know that physical karāmāt are not worthy of any attention when compared to spiritual karāmāt. Furthermore, they have heard countless times from Hadrat Wālā that a seeker who keeps himself occupied in his task [of seeking Allāh *taʿālā*] does not even hope to see the karāmāt of his shaykh. This is because he is witnessing the karāmāt of his shaykh within himself all the time. A seeker who is not witnessing this must conclude that either he is not fully occupied in the path, he has no affinity with his shaykh, or his shaykh is not an erudite shaykh.

The Purpose Behind Kashf And Karāmat Discussions

Really if we look, we will find that most discussions and interest in kashf and karāmāt are to be heard more in those places where there is a throng of seekers of this world. And most of those who perform supernatural feats have seekers of this world rallying around them. This is especially nowadays because seekers of Dīn are generally few in number, and those who revert to the Ahlullāh mostly do it for their worldly benefit. However, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that Hadrat Wālā has laid down his programme of training in such a manner that none can remain with him except those who are seekers of Dīn, and that too, seekers who are genuine seekers. Hadrat Wālā himself said on one occasion: "It is impossible for any Tom, Dick and Harry to stay here. Only a genuine seeker can remain here. Without wanting to draw a comparison – this is similar to the statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which he made in describing a quality of Madīnah. He said:

كالكير ينفي الخبث

Like a bellows which gets rid off filth and grime.

Hadrat Wālā's Method of Rectification

This is the blessing of Hadrat Wālā's method of rectification. Its essence is Sharʿī reckoning which a reformer has to resort to on occasions of necessity. Consequently, when Hadrat Wālā reprimands seekers, they are really deserving of that reprimand because they come with very chronic spiritual ailments which can only be treated through reprimands and restrictions. A striking example of this occurred very recently. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmā Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *quddisa sirruhu* was a renowned spiritual master who had a very large following. He used to reprimand, scold and rebuke most of those who went to him and used to receive them very sternly. He was well-known for this and most people knew about it. On one occasion, a person took the courage and asked him: "Hadrat, why do you behave so sternly on whoever comes here?" He replied: "Brother! What do you know? Each person has a hundred devils with him. I vent my anger on those devils."

As the saying goes: "When a Qalandar says something, he says it after seeing and experiencing it." The Ahlullāh are the spies of the hearts and they are complete manifestations of the following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

اتقوا فراسة المؤمن فإنه ينظر بنور الله

Fear the foresight of a believer because he looks with the light of Allāh.

If the spiritual masters scold and reprimand a person, he must be convinced – without any proof – that there is certainly a defect in him. When Allāh *taʿālā* bestows him with the light of insight by virtue of companionship, he will clearly see his defects either immediately or in the future. If not, it will certainly be exposed to others very quickly or after some time. We observe this night and day with Hadrat Wālā. Some incidents in this regard were related in previous chapters, and I just now remembered one incident. Hadrat Wālā diagnosed pride in a seeker but he never understood it. Only after five years he admitted saying: "Yes, it is only after such a long time

that I realized that Hadrat Wālā's diagnosis was absolutely correct. I definitely have pride in me." After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā normally quotes this saying: "The filth of the self is not realized even after many years."

Hadrat Wālā's Statement

I recall a fresh statement of Hadrat Wālā on the subject of his programme of rectification which he made while relating an incident yesterday, 7 Dhū al-Hijjah 1354 A.H. The story is as follows: Hadrat Wālā had written a beneficial article in reply to a certain seeker's letter. I suggested to Hadrat Wālā that it will be good to include the article in *Husn al-ʿAzīz*. Hadrat Wālā said: "The person who has taken up the responsibility of transcribing such letters has to pay the one who is to transcribe them. This is why I am very cautious when selecting letters for transcription so that it does not burden him. I only send those letters for transcription which – according to my temperament – are really worthy of transcription. Apart from this, the fact is that there is no letter which does not contain some beneficial point or the other."

He added: "I value the money of others more than my own. I do not burden anyone with even a single paisa. Nor do I ever make any request [for money] from anyone. I can go to the extent of saying that no one can show me a single incident from my entire life wherein I made a request to anyone which burdened him from the onset by myself. Look at how much consideration I show to others. Yet I am accused of being very strict. My only strictness is that I treat ailments of the self. Like a doctor – the poor fellow sits silently without saying anything. However, since it is his job to perform an operation, he has a scissor and lancet as well. Now if a patient comes to him with an injury which is beyond a mere plaster, he will certainly use his lancet even if the patient were to scream and cry a thousand times. After all, that is the job of the doctor. What fault is it of his? The fault is with the patient who allowed his wound to deteriorate to the point of needing a lancet. If he wanted to save himself from the lancet even in this condition, he should not have come to the doctor in the first place. The doctor certainly did not ask him to come."

Focus On The Essential Treasure

By virtue of this method of rectification of Hadrat Wālā it is only the genuine and true seekers who remain by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. Unlike the seekers of this world, they neither wait to witness kashf and karāmat nor do they pay any attention to it. Instead, they remain engrossed and immersed in acquiring the essential treasure which Hadrat Wālā possesses, i.e. Dīn. This is why no one even bothered to investigate such incidents which are normally included as kashf and karāmat. Nonetheless, whatever incidents come to mind spontaneously will be presented to the reader.

As explained in detail in the previous chapter, Hadrat Wālā's greatest and most glaring karāmat is his undeniable extraordinary steadfastness and Dīnī services. This book, *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, is filled with incidents and episodes in this regard. As regards divine benefactions, Hadrat Wālā constantly says out of gratitude and appreciation: "All praise is due to Allāh I receive help and guidance from Allāh *taʿālā* all the time. Although I do not hear any voice, but it is as if Allāh *taʿālā* is saying to me at every step of the way: 'Look! This is how We favoured you here. Look! This is how We helped you here.'"

A Few Incidents

I suffice with this short prelude at this point because the previous chapter in its entirety is really a prelude to this chapter. As promised, I now present a few incidents related to the present chapter, Divine Benefactions. I learnt of these incidents either directly or indirectly from reliable sources. Some of them have already been related in previous chapters wherever it was considered appropriate to relate them. It is therefore possible for someone to think that there is repetition here. However, since the incidents which I already related are not before me at present, it is difficult for me to avoid repetition. Furthermore, bearing in mind that the theme will probably be different, it cannot be considered a repetition entirely.

Hadrat Wālā's birth

Hadrat Wālā's very existence is in itself an undeniable powerful and amazing karāmat. This is most apparent from the incident of Hadrat Wālā's blessed birth. Details in this regard were given

in the appropriate chapter. Details as to how it is a karāmat are given here. The linguistic meaning of karāmat is "paying tribute, honouring". A karāmat is called a karāmat because Allāh *taʿālā* honours His righteous servant through it. Thus, Allāh *taʿālā* paid tribute to Hadrat Wālā from the very beginning when his parents had completely given up hope of getting any children. A well-known Majdhūb of the time, Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, made duʿā' for them and also gave the glad tidings of his birth by naming him [before his birth]. Thus, Hadrat Wālā came into this world by virtue of the duʿā' and glad tidings of that pious man.

To be born through the blessings of the duʿā' and glad tidings of accepted servants of Allāh *taʿālā* is also a great honour. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself says with reference to his own merits:

أنا دعوة أبي إبراهيم وبشارة عيسى عليهما السلام.[1]

I am the result of the supplication of my father, Ibrāhīm, and the glad tiding of ʿĪsā ʿalayhimas salām.

Details with regard to Hadrat Wālā's blessed birth were given in chapter four. The reader may refer to it. Hadrat Wālā related this incident in *Amwāj Talab* in Persian. It is quoted here:

The story of out birth (both brothers) is quite strange. Perhaps it will not be inappropriate to continue this discussion and mention it as it was heard from the seniors of the family and from those who were present at that time. The gist of the story is that whilst in Meerut my late father picked up such a serious skin allergy that whatever they tried proved useless. Eventually the physicians said to my father that there is one medication for this sickness which, though very effective, may render you infertile. My father accepted the treatment not because of the fact that none of his male issues survived thus far, but rather he believed that remaining sound and healthy holds priority over the concern of the progeny continuing. The medication was administered and his health was restored. However, the thought of being infertile created some concerns. Taking his yearly leave he left Meerut and came home. He related the entire story to my mother. She also became greatly perturbed

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[1] الخصائص الكبرى للسيوطي، ج ١، ص ٩.

by this news. Eventually the story reached my maternal grandmother. Around that time a great saint, Hāfiz Hadrat Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib was in the area. Because of his previous association and friendship with my maternal grandfather he had come over. My grandfather explained the entire predicament and complained that her (my mother's) children do not survive to which this saint mysteriously replied: "In the struggle between ʿUmar and ʿAlī they are dying. From now onwards entrust it to ʿAlī. The children will remain alive." This mysterious answer could not be understood by anybody besides my mother. With the insight Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed her with she unravelled this mystery. She explained that the father of the children is a Fārūqī (hailing from the progeny of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*) and she the mother was an ʿAlawī (from the descendants of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*). Until now the new-born was named by the father's name. For example, the name would be kept Fadl-e-Haq. (Hadrat s father's name was ʿAbd al-Haq). Hence from now on if a child is born, name him after the mother by adding the name ʿAlī. The saint smiled and said, "This woman is very intelligent. This is exactly what I meant." He also predicted that she will have two sons. One should be named Ashraf ʿAlī and the other Akbar ʿAlī. Both of them will remain alive and enjoy a bright future. Hence, two sons were born and remained alive and up till now are enjoying a happy and comfortable life.

Manifestation of a lofty rank in childhood

Hadrat Wālā said: "I personally remember and I also heard from the elders in my family that whenever I had to undertake a journey, it would be cloudy on that day [making the journey easy and comfortable]."

I [the compiler] say: The fact that the elders in his family make specific mention of this shows that it used to happen most of the time and it was considered to be a peculiarity of Hadrat Wālā. While on this topic, I just recalled another incident which took place in his childhood. Hadrat Wālā had also heard from the elders of his family that he could not tolerate looking at any person's exposed stomach. If he incidentally saw an exposed stomach, he would vomit. Consequently, youngsters of his age used to taunt him by exposing their stomachs to him. This demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's extraordinary fine and fastidious nature during his childhood. It is considered to be a special

quality of nobility which expressed itself in a unique manner. It was neither seen nor heard of in any child. It has therefore been related in this chapter.

Providing answers without knowing the question

I received affirmation of this from countless people and I myself experienced it on numerous occasions. Any person who comes to Hadrat Wālā with a certain concern in his heart or has a certain objection to make, Hadrat Wālā gives an answer to it before the person can even express his concern or objection. If anyone comes with an internal worry, Hadrat Wālā will say something either directly to the person or in a general assembly whereby the person is consoled and pacified. This quality is a confirmation of the following couplet of the *Mathnawī*:

> O that personality whose mere visit is an answer to every question. Problems are solved by you without having to get into discussions and investigations.

Consequently, based on similar observations, certain scholars expressed with conviction to Hadrat Wālā that he is certainly a man of kashf. However, Hadrat Wālā took an oath and denied it. As related in the previous chapter, he explained it by saying: "Allāh *taʿālā* knows that when a certain person gives an answer, the person who is in doubt will be satisfied. This is why He instils the answer in the heart of the answerer."

A famous scholar wrote about his conviction in this regard [that Hadrat Wālā has kashf] and sent the letter to Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā denied his thoughts, but when the person still did not accept and considered Hadrat Wālā's denial to be out of humility, then Hadrat Wālā wrote: "That trader is very fortunate who himself displays the defect in his goods but the buyer insists that it is not defective, it is very valuable."

I recall my own incident about getting an answer to my objections without even expressing them to Hadrat Wālā. It was a very long time ago when Hadrat Wālā was delivering a lecture in Allāhābād. In the course of the lecture, Hadrat Wālā said that a person should not become distressed by whisperings because they are not inside the heart. Rather, Satan casts them from the top. When I heard this, the thought came to my mind that it seems as if the whisperings are really inside the heart. No sooner I thought this, Hadrat Wālā immediately said: "Although it seems that they are inside the heart, the reality is

that only their reflection is inside while they remain on top of the heart. For example, when a fly is sitting on a mirror, it seems as if it is sitting inside. Whereas, the mirror is only reflecting it, while it is sitting on the mirror.” I was immediately satisfied by this explanation and the objection which had come to my mind was removed.

Testimony of the heart when interacting with people

We also witnessed this on countless occasions: When Hadrat Wālā treats a person in a particular manner at a particular time, it is proven later on that the person was fully eligible for that type of treatment. This notwithstanding the fact that at the time, onlookers would have considered his treatment of the person to be most astonishing. Quite some time ago a youngster came, expressed his confidence in Hadrat Wālā and requested bayʿah. Hadrat Wālā disregarded him and in order to defer his matter, he asked the youngster to study *Islāh ar-Rusūm* to make up his mind.

I felt sorry for the youngster so I bought a copy of *Islāh ar-Rusūm* with my money and gave it to him. After he departed, we learnt that he had become angry with his father and fled here [to Thānah Bhawan]. Hadrat Wālā reprimanded me saying: “When I treat any person in a particular manner, I do not want any of my associates to interfere because when Allāh *taʿālā* takes a certain work from a person, He bestows him with understanding of that work. There is no achievement of mine in it. Consequently, my heart accepts some people immediately while it does not accept others. Although I do not have any proof for accepting or rejecting anyone at the time, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the testimony of my heart is proven correct later on. This is similar to a person swallowing a fly unwittingly. Although he has no knowledge of the fly, his stomach recognizes it very well. It will never accept. It will throw it out immediately.”

Hadrat Wālā also says in this regard: “My heart inclines spontaneously towards some people and I myself feel that the person should request bayʿah. Consequently, when this happened, in most cases Allāh *taʿālā* caused the person to request for bayʿah. Since I realize that Allāh *taʿālā* sent him because of my wish, I do not refuse. I accept his bayʿah without hesitation.”

In short, we witness countless incidents which demonstrate the correctness of the testimony of Hadrat Wālā's heart.

An incident related by Shaykh Muhammad 'Umar Allāhābādī

Shaykh Muhammad 'Umar Allāhābādī Sāhib is a murīd of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Allāhābādī *rahimahullāh*. The latter was a Pīr Bhāi of Hadrat Wālā. About thirty years after his shaykh passed away, Shaykh Sāhib [Muhammad 'Umar] was returning from Pīrān Kalyar Sharīf so he came to Thānah Bhawan to visit Hadrat Wālā. Shaykh Sāhib relates: "When I informed my travelling companion of my intention to stop over at Thānah Bhawan on our return in order to meet Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī, he agreed but said: 'You must not inform him that you are returning from an 'Urs in Pīrān Kalyar Sharīf. If not, although the Maulānā will not be too displeased with you, the people in the Khānqāh will consider you to be a bid'atī and dislike you severely.'"

"Anyway, when I presented myself, Hadrat Wālā asked: 'Where are you coming from?' I replied: 'From Allāhābād.' He asked: 'When did you leave Allāhābād?' I thought to myself: 'I have been caught out now.' But I had to give him an answer so I said: 'About eight-ten days ago.' He asked: 'Where were you staying in the intervening period?' I replied: 'In Pīrān Kalyar Sharīf.' Hadrat Wālā fell silent after this. He neither knew me from before nor did I inform him that I am the murīd of Maulānā Allāhābādī because I never had the opportunity of saying this to him. When Hadrat Wālā's worker asked: 'Where will his food be prepared?' Hadrat Wālā said: 'He is my guest, his food will be prepared in my house.' The worker then asked me about my eating habits, so Hadrat Wālā said to him: 'There is no need to ask him about his eating habits, he is our own. He will eat whatever he receives at whatever time he gets it.'"

After relating this, Shaykh Sāhib said: "When Hadrat Wālā said 'he is our own', my mind immediately went to the spiritual unity and unity in spiritual lineage between Hadrat Wālā and Hadrat Maulānā Allāhābādī *rahimahullāh*. I was very impressed by it and was also overcome by joy. I was astonished at how Hadrat Wālā knew that 'he is our own'. He treated me as his own, and although it was against his practice to accept gifts from a person who visits him for the first time, he accepted the gifts which I brought for him."

The compiler's own incident

While I was a Deputy Collector, I had made an application to the Education Board to transfer my services there. The Education Board did not have any such post at the time so I received a letter of refusal and I lost all hope. When Hadrat Wālā came to Kānpūr, where I was the Deputy Collector, I mentioned the refusal letter to him and my despair at obtaining a transfer. Hadrat Wālā immediately said: "You must continue trying. My heart testifies that – Allāh willing – a better position will be made available to you."

Subsequently, I continued trying. Coincidentally and through the prayers and wishes of Hadrat Wālā, the Education Board introduced a completely new post known as Deputy Inspector of Muslim Madāris. I, together with other Deputy Inspectors, was hired to this position. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

This is an open blessing of Hadrat Wālā's prayer and glad tidings, and an undeniable proof of the correctness of his heart's testimony.

The compiler's deputy collectorship examination

Similarly, I was quite despondent about writing the exams for the post of Deputy Collector. I came to Thānah Bhawan after the exams. One day, Hadrat Wālā lied down to take a rest after a certain salāh. His attendants began massaging his legs. I also joined them. Hadrat Wālā fell asleep in the meantime so I got up and left. Hadrat Wālā asked for me after some time so I presented myself before him. He said: "I was just now seeing a very detailed dream about your exams. Although there is the possibility of being disgraced by telling you before hand, I am nothing and so are my dreams. This is why I am relating it to you. I do not recall the entire dream but I remember the gist of it. You have become despondent and I saw in the dream that you were doubtful about passing a certain question. However, you have received sufficient marks to obtain a pass." Consequently, all praise is due to Allāh, I passed and Hadrat Wālā's glad tidings proved to be absolutely correct. I was certainly very scared about a certain question. I will not be surprised if the examiner gave me a few concessionary marks and passed me bearing in mind that it was my final exam.

The fowls which were kept enclosed

One day Hadrat Wālā removed the letters of the seekers who were residing in the Khānqāh from the letter-box which was attached to the wall and in which the seekers used to place their letters. Hadrat Wālā removed them after the fajr salāh and was writing replies to them. One of the letters contained a confusing matter for which Hadrat Wālā could not think of what reply to write. This, notwithstanding the fact that irrespective of how confusing a spiritual matter a person may write about, Hadrat Wālā is able to immediately understand it, give a satisfactory answer by the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, and his pen just flows. Hadrat Wālā was perplexed and thought to himself: "O Allāh! What is happening today? Why am I not able to fathom an answer with conviction?" It is Hadrat Wālā's practice never to write an answer if he is not fully satisfied and convinced. He was still thinking about this when the thought crossed his mind that in his junior wife's house, the fowls are left locked in their pen because Hadrat Pīrānī Sāhibah [Hadrat Wālā's wife] is gone to Kīrānah and there is no one to open them.

Hadrat Wālā proceeded to his house immediately and opened the fowl-run. When he returned and sat down to reply to that letter, the answer came to him immediately.

After relating this incident to us, Hadrat Wālā said: "Because the fowls were locked and restricted, Allāh *taʿālā* locked and restricted my mind. When I opened them, Allāh *taʿālā* opened my mind and I was satisfied and convinced sufficiently to write an answer. This was a clear guidance and steering from Allāh *taʿālā*. If not, the poor fowls would have remained encaged for the entire day and I would not have even thought about them. Since it was not my daily practice to open them, it did not even cross my mind to go and open them."

A fatwā on inheritance for a villager

A villager came with a note enquiring about a ruling related to inheritance. He rushed Hadrat Wālā to write an answer. After the villager departed, Hadrat Wālā realized that he had mistakenly written the wrong answer. He became extremely worried because he neither knew the villager's name, his address nor which direction he went in. He knew absolutely nothing about the man. Hadrat Wālā was extremely distressed

because it was a ruling with regard to inheritance, it may cause the rights of several people to be forfeited and this deprivation will continue further down [to succeeding generations]. He made a duʿā' from the depths of his heart to Allāh *taʿālā*: "O Allāh! This matter is now out of my control. There is no way I can make up for it. However, You have power over everything. You alone can find a solution for me from the unseen."

Not long thereafter Hadrat Wālā saw the villager coming back with the fatwā. When he reached, he said: "O Maulwījī! I had walked quite a distance. Along the way my eyes fell on the fatwā and I noticed that it has no stamp on it. Please stamp it." Hadrat Wālā was overjoyed. He said: "Give it to me brother. I have no stamp. However, in my rush I wrote the wrong answer. Allāh *taʿālā* sent you back to me so that I may correct the answer. I was extremely worried because I have no knowledge whatsoever about your whereabouts. I was just making duʿā' within my heart. Very well, Allāh *taʿālā* sent you back with that excuse and accepted my duʿā'."

Hadrat Wālā then wrote the correct answer and gave it to him. Glory to Allāh! What a clear and open help from Allāh *taʿālā*. It is superior even to a karāmat.

After relating this incident Hadrat Wālā said: "After that day, I do not write a hand delivered fatwā immediately because when a person is waiting for it, it is like an imposition on me. This causes me to be agitated and the fear of a mistake therefore remains."

The story of the firewood

This occurred quite some time ago. Acting on the advice of his senior wife, Hadrat Wālā purchased a large quantity of firewood for ten rupees. It was of good quality, but by coincidence, Hadrat Wālā did not have the money at the time. He therefore incurred a debt to buy it. Even a single paisa of debt is very weighty on Hadrat Wālā's independent heart. First of all, Hadrat Wālā never owes anyone anything. If he did incur a debt on some rare occasion, Allāh *taʿālā* enables him to pay it off very quickly. The present debt weighed heavily on his blessed heart, so he made duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* and it was accepted soon thereafter. The firewood was purchased in the evening and Allāh *taʿālā* enabled him to pay off his debt the next day in the following way: A distinguished Ra'īs of a nearby

town who also held a high post in a certain municipality had taken leave and presented himself to meet Hadrat Wālā. The man was also a murīd of Hadrat Wālā. He presented twenty five rupees as a gift to Hadrat Wālā. However, he only accepted ten rupees and returned the remaining fifteen rupees to him.

Hadrat Wālā says with regard to this incident: "I had originally thought of accepting an even lesser amount but I feared that I had made du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* for ten rupees. If I were to take less, Allāh *ta'ālā* might be displeased and say: 'You had asked for it, but when I convey it to you, you refuse.' A few companions of the Ra'īs remained behind and I learnt from them that the Ra'īs had originally intended giving me ten rupees but he felt it was a small amount, so he added fifteen rupees." Allāh *ta'ālā* put it in the heart of Hadrat Wālā to accept the amount which was given out of sincerity [the original ten rupees] and to return the one which was given for show. When the companions expressed their astonishment and asked whether he had kashf, Hadrat Wālā denied it and related the entire incident as above.

A villager brings molasses

A man from a nearby village brought molasses as a gift but Hadrat Wālā declined it. Later it was learnt that it was of zakāh. Hadrat Wālā expressed his thanks to Allāh *ta'ālā* and said to those who were present: "Look! People accuse me of being overly suspicious. Imagine if I accepted it without making inquiries from him and learnt about its true nature later on, how displeasing it would have been to me!? Furthermore, the villager's zakāh would not have been fulfilled. All thanks are due to Allāh *ta'ālā* for creating an aversion for it before hand, after all, this man left no stone unturned in trying to convince me to accept it." Hadrat Wālā then quoted the following couplet:

> Your sword is not destined to kill this weak man.
> After all, there was no shortcoming whatsoever in your merciless heart.

"Could a person have thought of such possibilities? It is solely through Allāh's guidance that the heart experiences these things."

Most of Hadrat Wālā's precautions are proven to be correct later on from incidents. He says on such occasions: "Look!

People accuse me of being overly suspicious. If I am like that, how come most of my suspicions are proven to be true?”

Diagnosing the ailments of the self

When it comes to diagnosing the ailments of the self, Allāh *taʿālā* blessed Hadrat Wālā with complete mastery and genuine insight in this field which have made him unique in the science of rectification and accorded him the title of Hakīm al-Ummat in the world. Sometime ago, Hadrat Wālā himself said in this regard while talking about a certain matter: “When a seeker comes here for rectification, then by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the moment I interact with him, I immediately have a rough idea of what ailment he has come with and what treatment will benefit him.” This insight is superior to and more beneficial than thousands of kashf. There are countless incidents of this nature, some of which have already been related.

In the prelude to this chapter I had related how Hadrat Wālā diagnosed pride in a certain seeker and how the seeker himself admitted it after five years. I recall another incident. Hadrat Wālā was taking a person to task on the basis of the Sharīʿah about a certain matter. Another seeker was seated there. Hadrat Wālā perceived by the latter’s expression that he has some objection in his heart against Hadrat Wālā’s taking the person to task. Subsequently, the seeker acknowledged it when Hadrat Wālā asked him about it. Hadrat Wālā said to him: “I am very pleased by your honesty but based on the principle that honesty demands honesty, let me tell you the truth as well: In such a situation, you will not benefit from me. You must now revert to someone else. You must not correspond me with nor come to me for the rest of your life.”

A person asked Hadrat Wālā to elaborate on this so he said: “If a person has just a whispering about his shaykh, there is no need to bother about. If he is astonished about a certain point because he does not understand it, there is no harm in it as well. However, objections and doubts are serious matters. If the heart experiences them, they are extremely harmful and are obstacles to deriving benefit. If a person is astonished at or has whisperings over a certain statement or action of his shaykh, he must not seek an explanation from his shaykh but from someone else. If not, it will cause a restriction in his [shaykh’s] heart because if the shaykh gives an answer to it [the astonishment or whispering], it will mean that he wants the

murīd to remain his adherent. What need does he have that he has to explain to his murīd?! How can his religious and natural self-respect tolerate this?"

Similarly there was another person who was a scholar. Hadrat Wālā used to rectify him on different occasions whenever he felt the need. Hadrat Wālā perceived from the scholar's facial expression that he was offended so he clearly said to him: "There is no personal gain for me in these rectifications. I keep a check on you for your own good. If you are offended and feel that I must not treat you in this way you must tell me without hesitation." The person acknowledged that he was offended. Hadrat Wālā then withdrew from rectifying him and began treating him with more formality.

Hadrat Wālā says with reference to him: "After that, when I used to reply to his letters, I used to address him with the titles 'Makhdūm wa Mukarram'. However, if he asked anything about his rectification, I would refuse blankly." Hadrat Wālā also says: "I find it very difficult to conceal the thievery of a person's self."

Consequently, we very often notice how Hadrat Wālā fathoms a seeker's actual condition either through his acumen or such incidents occur through Allāh *taʿālā* that his actual condition is exposed. These two are from among the greatest divine gifts. Moreover, we also witness almost all the time how Hadrat Wālā's treatments are different despite the conditions being identical, and these differences are proven to be exactly what sound judgement demanded. Their basis is by and large solely on the testimony of the heart. The secret behind this is that through the blessing of dhikr and obedience, Allāh *taʿālā* made Hadrat Wālā's pure heart finely perceptive and genuinely discerning. No matter what condition a person may be experiencing at a time, the exact same effect falls on Hadrat Wālā's heart and he treats him accordingly even though the conditions may appear the same outwardly.

If a seeker follows his own conditions carefully and observes Hadrat Wālā's interaction specifically with him, he will see the correctness of the testimony of Hadrat Wālā's heart as clearly as the light of day. This is on condition he is occupied in the path and fully concerned about his rectification. I also observed on certain occasions that Hadrat Wālā sometimes does not act immediately on the testimony of his heart. However, he stores

his impression in his mind and awaits the right moment. It also occurred on numerous occasions that various seekers sought rectification for exactly the same defect but Hadrat Wālā prescribed one treatment for one seeker and a different treatment for another seeker. He says in this regard: "Allāh *ta'ālā* places in my heart whatever is most beneficial. All praise is due to Allāh, I later learn from the seeker's letter that my treatment had been beneficial."

I just remembered now: For some seekers who were suffering from pride, Hadrat Wālā prescribed a treatment which weighed heavily on them. Hadrat Wālā instructed one seeker: "In every letter which you write to me, you must only write: 'I have pride in me. Make du'ā' for me.' Once you have written five letters like this, you must describe your condition to me. The seeker subsequently benefited from this treatment.

I wrote about a defect which was in me to Hadrat Wālā. He wrote back: "I had kept your letter aside for the entire day yesterday because you already know all the different treatments for this ailment. I continued thinking about what I should write. In the fajr salāh of this morning a special treatment came to my heart. I am writing it to you because it is a new treatment." Subsequently, by the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* the defect regarding whose rectification I had almost lost hope was completely uprooted. When I informed Hadrat Wālā of this result, he wrote back: "I too had expected this to happen from Allāh *ta'ālā*."

Since these are all glaring benefactions, I considered it appropriate to make mention of them in this chapter. This notwithstanding the fact that some of them were already mentioned in previous chapters and there are many other similar incidents of this nature which have been related previously.

Thinking of a person has an effect on the latter's heart

I experienced this on many occasions: Hadrat Wālā would think of me over a certain matter and I too will experience a certain condition in my heart all of a sudden – without any external cause – and think to myself that Hadrat Wālā is thinking of me at present. Later on I would learn from those who were present in his assembly that Hadrat Wālā certainly made mention of me. In fact, on one occasion I went suddenly

to him and found a note in his hand. He was looking for someone to send the note to me. When I reached him, he said: "I was thinking of you this very moment." The effect such incidents have on my heart always takes the form of a pulling sensation towards Allāh *taʿālā*. This shows that remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* is always immersed in Hadrat Wālā's thoughts. So much so that if he has to pass a superficial thought over one of his negligent attendants, it creates an immediate effect of remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* on his heart.

The end of stress after writing to Hadrat Wālā

I experienced this myself on several occasions and most associates also confirmed their own experiences in this regard that when I wrote to Hadrat Wālā about an external or internal worry, it started leaving me immediately after writing about it. And once I received a reply from him, the worry left me completely by Allāh's grace. Just two days ago a very reliable and religious person wrote to me about his brother who is a Deputy Collector and presently in the service of Hadrat Wālā. He wrote: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* my child is completely cured. It is very strange that when I experience any hardship or calamity and write to Hadrat Wālā about it, the moment I finish writing to him, I find the hardship decreasing and by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* find its effect leaving the heart. When I returned home, I found my child suffering from pneumonia. It was very difficult for him to breathe. I wrote to Hadrat Wālā and, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, his condition improved from that very day. By the second or third day he felt completely better by Allāh's grace. Now he just has a light cough."

I [the compiler] have had so many experiences of this nature that I relate them to most of those of my Pīr Bhāis with whom I am quite informal and I stress on them to write to Hadrat Wālā as much as they can so that rectitude and success in Dīn and this world may be acquired. Unfortunately, I myself am not so particular in this regard because of my disorganized nature. However, whenever I wrote to him, I certainly experienced an improvement in my external and internal conditions.

There are also many witnesses to this fact that when those who are in problems present them to Hadrat Wālā, they are solved very quickly by Allāh's grace. In fact, Hadrat Wālā prescribed on some of them to remain with him so that he could treat

their worries. At present there is a seeker who is living in the Khānqāh. He came here to treat a very severe worry. He came with the intention of spending a long time here and decided that even if it takes several years for his worry to be removed, he will stay. However, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, his worry was completely removed by the third day. Hadrat Wālā gave him the good news and wrote: "All praise is due to Allāh you have been treated from the unseen." Hadrat Wālā permitted him to leave quickly because he is a student.

He departed today after being completely satisfied whereas before this he had lost all hope of having his worry removed. Similarly, worries of countless seekers are removed via letters which Hadrat Wālā receives on a daily basis. Some of them went to the extent of writing back to Hadrat Wālā saying: "Your miraculous letter saved me from suicide." This is why Hadrat Wālā continues replying to letters and adheres strictly to his programme of replying to them.

There was one seeker who was a murīd of another shaykh. His shaykh was gone for hajj and he, in the meantime, was experiencing a severe inundation of worries. He became terrified and reverted to Hadrat Wālā through a letter. He felt consoled the moment he received Hadrat Wālā's reply and all his worries disappeared. He wrote a second letter to Hadrat Wālā in which he made a lot of duʿā' for him and expressed his gratitude to him for steering him during these troubled times.

In short, there are thousands of experiences of this nature wherein people receive a lot of consolation from Hadrat Wālā's letters. In fact, as mentioned at the beginning of this point they experience relief the moment they start writing about their worries to him. The secret behind this is as explained by Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Aʿlā Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*: "Since an erudite shaykh is a manifestation of Allāh's name – al-Hādī (the Guide), his blessing reaches a genuine seeker without his knowledge."

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* the associates of Hadrat Wālā are genuinely and certainly convinced of this blessing. Part of his blessing is that small concise sentences in his letters far outweigh the effect of lengthy booklets. I myself fully remember the strong impressions Hadrat Wālā's letters made on my heart. Some details in this were given in the chapter on

spiritual instruction. Hadrat Wālā himself said on several occasions: Although my replies are very concise, a person must see their effect when they reach the addressee. The cause of this can be nothing but blessing." This is a clear proof of Hadrat Wālā's acceptance in Allāh's sight. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* alone. This is the bounty of Allāh which He confers on whomever He wills. May Allāh *taʿālā* make his pen even more powerful. Āmīn.

Blessings in his time

As mentioned in detail in the chapter on his written works, Allāh *taʿālā* placed obvious and glaring blessings in Hadrat Wālā's time. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had given him glad tidings in this regard at the very beginning. There is no doubt whatsoever about it, anyone who wished can check for himself. We do not know of anyone who can achieve the same level and amount of writing work as Hadrat Wālā.

Very often we see that while Hadrat Wālā is writing a book or letter and needs to look for a reference in a certain book, he is able to find it very quickly. One day while he was writing the commentary to *Mathnawī*, he needed to find out about a certain terminology or general habit of pigeon trainers. Hadrat Wālā was perplexed as to where he will find a pigeon trainer whom he could ask. Incidentally a man came and asked Hadrat Wālā for a taʿwīdh. He knew that the man was a pigeon trainer so he asked him about the terminology. That particular place in the *Mathnawī* was immediately solved and there was no obstacle in his work. This was a glaring guidance from Allāh *taʿālā*.

Furthermore – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – Hadrat Wālā rarely falls ill. If he does fall ill, then by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* his illness does not last too long which could cause obstacles in his work. The many Dīnī services which Allāh *taʿālā* has deputed him to carry out are – by His grace and help – being rendered in an excellent manner without any impediments. Had Hadrat Wālā faced obstacles as are faced by many people and his work stopped for a few days, then due to the large amount of work which he does, a lot of work would have accumulated and it would have become difficult for him to complete it. We can gauge from this that because Allāh *taʿālā* wants Hadrat Wālā to carry out his duties, He protects him from all types of obstacles. We noticed quite

often that if he received a very large number of letters on a certain day, then the numbers of those who normally came to ask him for taʿwīdh either decreased or they did not come at all. If anyone did come, he came after Hadrat Wālā completed replying to all the letters. These are obvious divine benefactions.

Ease while on a journey

I undertook several journeys with Hadrat Wālā. I do not recall ever finding it difficult to find a place in a coach despite travelling in third class which is normally full most of the time. I used to be astonished when, on some stations, large groups of travellers will pass by searching for a place on the coaches but would not even look in the direction of the coach in which Hadrat Wālā was seated. In short, the journey would be covered very comfortably. He would always perform his salāh with congregation inside the coach, and the congregation would be quite long. If apart from Hadrat Wālā's companions, there were other travellers, the latter would be extremely considerate towards Hadrat Wālā and his companions. Even the Hindus used to be very impressed by him. So much so that if his coach was changed and he had to move to another coach, those who were in the present coach would say in remorse: "Where are you going? Because of you there was a lot of light and effulgence here."

On one occasion Hadrat Wālā was engaged in a light conversation with his companions. There were two Hindu Aryans who began whispering to each other. One of Hadrat Wālā's companions overhead their conversation. One was saying to the other: "I do not know why, but I am very much drawn to what he is saying." The other replied: "It is a sign of his truthfulness." As the saying goes:

الفضل ما شهدت به الأعداء

Virtue is what enemies testify to.

A letter addressed to a jinn

A daughter of one of Hadrat Wālā's attendants was affected by jinn. Hadrat Wālā is no ʿāmil and also made out from the effects that the influence of the jinn was quite strong. This is why he did not consider it prudent to give a taʿwīdh. However,

when Hadrat Wālā's senior wife insisted, he wrote a letter to the jinn stating:

If you are a Muslim, I remind you of the warnings in the Qur'ān and Hadīth which are made against those who vex and trouble others. If you are an unbeliever, then we first make an overture of peace. If you do not accept, then remember that we also have such people who can completely uproot you.

When this letter was read before the lady, the jinn said: "This is the letter of a person whose warning cannot be ignored. Very well, I am leaving." The effects of the jinn disappeared immediately but returned after some time. When the jinn was told: "We are going back to Thānah Bhawan", he said: "No, do not go there. I am leaving." The effects of the jinn disappeared. Someone rightly said:

> When a person fears Allāh *taʿālā* and remains righteous and pious, the jinn, mankind and everyone else fear him.

However, because this jinn was coming repeatedly, arrangements for his complete removal and uprooting were made with Hadrat Hājī Muhammad ʿĀbid Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh* who was a qualified ʿāmil.

Joining Allāh in helping a person through the unseen

It was quite a while back when a person who was here in the Khānqāh related his personal incident to me. He said: Although it seems that Hadrat Wālā is sitting here, we do not know where he is at the moment. I am saying this because although Hadrat Wālā was in Thānah Bhawan, I saw him in ʿAlīgarh on one occasion when a fair was held there and it had caught on fire. I had also taken my stall to the fair. Contrary to the norm, the day on which the fire broke out, I felt some type of fear and trepidation in my heart from around ʿasr time. Consequently, although it was the time when the fair would be really busy and the time when one would be able to sell one's goods, I began packing all my goods into boxes. The fire started at maghrib time and there was noise and shouting all around. I was alone and the boxes which I had packed were quite heavy. I was very distressed and worried about how I would carry the boxes out of my stall. I suddenly saw Hadrat Wālā appearing before me. He went to each of the boxes and said to me: "Carry them away quickly."

He then personally carried each box on one side while I carried it from the other side. In a short while we moved all the boxes outside. The other shopkeepers suffered many losses because of the fire but, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, all my goods were saved.

After relating this story to me, I asked him: "Did you not ask Hadrat Wālā what he was doing there at that time?" He replied: "Where did I have the chance to ask him such a question? I was caught up in my own worries at the time."

When I related the story to Hadrat Wālā he said: "Someone also related this story to me but I have no knowledge of it. However, there are times when Allāh *taʿālā* helps and steers a person in unseen ways via a form [or person] which the person is accustomed to and enables him to accomplish his task through him while the person himself [who was used to help the person in distress] has no knowledge of it."

A masjid gets inhabited

The respectable Maulānā ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Gamthaulwī had been a teacher at Barā Ujrārah Madrasah, district Meerut. He personally related to me: Hadrat Wālā came to their Madrasah to deliver a speech at their graduation ceremony. On reaching the town, the salāh in all the masājid had already been performed. Hadrat Wālā was saddened by the fact that he did not get the congregation and asked repeatedly: "Is there no masjid where the congregation has not taken place as yet?" When he asked this question repeatedly, some people said to him that there is an uninhabited masjid which is completely dilapidated. When he heard the word "uninhabited", he said: "Come, let us go and inhabit it then." Hadrat Wālā proceeded to that masjid with his companions and performed salāh with congregation.

The Maulānā continues: Hadrat Wālā's going to that masjid resulted in so much of blessings that from that very time the masjid became inhabited and it was also reconstructed. The residents of the area who used to go to other masājid because this one was dilapidated now started performing their salāh here. In short, Hadrat Wālā's words: "Come, let us go and inhabit it then" were realized to the letter by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*.

The blessings of love and respect for Hadrat Wālā

The number of accounts portraying the blessings of having confidence in Hadrat Wālā, and the murkiness of weak confidence or no confidence in him are so many that they are undeniable. These are glaring signs of Hadrat Wālā's acceptance in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā* especially for those who experienced both conditions. Hadrat Wālā receives many letters describing both conditions. These clearly show how Hadrat Wālā is a clear manifestation of the following couplets of Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*:

> Empty your mind of rejection of your beloved so that you may get the fragrance of your beloved's flower.
>
> Even if an angel does not have the benefactions of Allāh *taʿālā* and His special servants, his page will be black.
>
> When you are envious of a person without any reason, your heart becomes black on account of that envy.

In the same way, open heartedness towards Hadrat Wālā results in blessings while ill feelings towards him result in darkness. There are many incidents to prove this.

Some people wrote very audacious and disparaging letters to Hadrat Wālā but later they were compelled to apologize to him. One of them wrote: "The light from my eyes diminished from that very day." Another person wrote: "Whatever satisfaction I used to experience in good deeds disappeared completely and I lost concentration of my heart totally." We learnt about a certain person who started experiencing bouts of lunacy. Some who had ill feelings towards him began perceiving both worlds to be dark and they feared a bad death. They witnessed the following statement of Hadrat Wālā with their own eyes. He said: "No person who has bad thoughts about his shaykh or ill-feelings towards him can ever live a life of peace in this world. In fact, some erudite scholars state that bad thoughts about the spiritual masters sometimes cause an evil death." May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us. Āmīn.

I [the compiler] say: Developing a bond with a shaykh must certainly be done after careful thought and consideration because the similitude of such a bond according to one of

Hadrat Wālā's senior khulafā' is like an electric light. A person can gain light from it and, if he is not careful, he can also be electrified and killed by it. That light now becomes a fire for him.

Hadrat Wālā constantly relates an incident which took place during his stay in Kānpūr. It was related at some place previously. Since it is related to this discussion, it is quoted concisely from *Husn al-ʿAzīz* volume one, number 613.

Hadrat Wālā said with reference to the statements made by a certain person: "They do not make any impression on my heart." Hadrat Wālā's worker, Miyā Niyāz asked: "How do they make an impression on the heart?" Hadrat Wālā went into a lengthy discussion and also related stories of how even insignificant matters of the spiritual masters have an effect. He then gave the reason for it by saying: "When something emanates from the heart, it has an effect on the hearts." He then said: "This is the reason Miyā Niyāz! We are affected by those things and they affect others as well." He added: "Why should reality not have an effect when a mere notion about a person being good has an effect on the person who has such a notion?"

I recall something else in this regard which happened in Kānpūr. Depending on the time of the year, I used to explain rules and regulations in my lectures. Consequently, in the month of Muharram I spoke about certain innovations and baseless customs. I think I also mentioned that it is a bidʿah to read the shahādat nāmah in Muharram. There was a certain scholar who was in the habit of reading the shahādat nāmah in Muharram. After my talk, an elderly man came to me. He had been a Raʾīs at some time in the past, a man of pomp and splendour, and used to love me a lot. He felt he was worried about my welfare when he said to me as an advice that the masses were speaking about the talk, especially about the shahādat nāmah. He added: "These masses are such that we should first try to win their hearts over and then speak out against evils. If you do this, they will not retract from you. If not, they will keep their distance."

I was offended by his counselling and said that it is most unfortunate for non-scholars to give advice to scholars on scholarly matters. I added: "You probably assume that we are dependent on the masses." I said this in a slightly harsh tone.

He too was after all a Khān Sāhib and my senior. He had advised me out of his fatherly affection and for my wellbeing. He said: "It becomes very complex when we give advice out of concern for another's welfare and it is not accepted." He left angrily without excusing himself. He had walked some distance when he came back and said: "First of all you do not pay heed to what I say, and when I want to leave you do not let me go. I do not know what you did because my feet just did not want to lift off the ground. Your statements had certainly offended me, but when I left here, I felt as if thousands of kilos of steel were tied to my feet and I just could not lift them. Undoubtedly there is something in all of this. Please forgive me for Allāh's sake and for Rasūlullāh's sake."

I said: "Khān Sāhib! What are you thinking? There is no power and might except with Allāh." I tried earnestly to pacify him and convince him that it was nothing, but he replied: "No matter what you say, I have seen it with my own eyes. There is no room to deny it now. Today I learnt what is fear and what is awe." I repeatedly said that he is merely assuming all this, but he said: "I feel others also have such powers but why did I not experience this with them?"

Acceptance in Allāh's sight and glad tidings

There are many glad tidings in the form of dreams related to Hadrat Wālā's acceptance in Allāh's sight. The booklet *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā* is filled with them. Some will – Allāh willing – be related in the following chapter. Many seekers received direct instruction via true dreams to revert to Hadrat Wālā and many still have such experiences to this day. The Hadīth refers to such dreams as *Mubashshirāt*. Some heedless associates also received warnings on account of which they were rectified. Two incidents occurred just recently.

The First Incident: A student got caught up in a love affair which was initiated by the other side. By Allāh's grace although it did not reach the extreme level of sin, it did cause a lot of distress to the extent that he gave up on life. When he could find no escape from it, he came severely anguished to Hadrat Wālā. Bearing in mind that his illness was quite severe and prolonged, he had made a firm determination of remaining in the Khānqāh until he is saved – even if it means having to remain there for several years. Hadrat Wālā too had advised him to leave that place. The student's genuine quest and

concern for rectification were also by virtue of his bond with Hadrat Wālā. This student is not the only one. Most of Hadrat Wālā's associates have been blessed with a genuine quest and concern for rectification by Allāh *taʿālā.* These are the qualities which are not just the keys to reaching Allāh *taʿālā* but entail reaching Him.

Anyway, the student presented himself and through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, Allāh *taʿālā* cured him completely from his illness within three days. His cure was realized as follows: The student saw a dream in which Hadrat Wālā's senior wife was beating the girl with whom he was in love with a shoe. No sooner he got up from his sleep, he found himself completely clear and his heart had no inclination whatsoever towards her. When he informed Hadrat Wālā via a hand-written note to him, Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Congratulations. Allāh *taʿālā* treated you from the unseen." In short, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's blessings he was so quickly and completely cured from such a chronic ailment for whose treatment he had been prepared to remain in the Khānqāh for several years. He was cured within three days. This is a clear manifestation of Hadrat Wālā's blessings.

The Second Incident: The second incident occurred just now. It concerns a person who was either very extreme in Dīn or was so distressed by a worldly calamity and lost his senses to the extent that – Allāh forbid – he wrote blasphemous doubts and sent the letter to Hadrat Wālā and to one of his Pīr Bhāis. The Pīr Bhāi replied in an affectionate tone, provided answers to his doubts out of concern for his wellbeing and sent the letter to him. However, Hadrat Wālā wrote back to the person in a very independent tone and merely wrote: "If you had a physical illness for which it was essential for you to live with a doctor [be hospitalized], what would you do?"

This was written exactly as wisdom demanded and was for the man's own wellbeing, but he did not value it. Where would he have bothered to present himself before Hadrat Wālā? Many days passed and he did not write any letter to Hadrat Wālā. On the other hand, Hadrat Wālā – in whom Allāh *taʿālā* filled so much of affection and concern – was so worried about the man that he was actually waiting for him. He even complained to me saying: "Look at the extent of his quest! He has just shut himself off completely!"

The man continued benefiting from Hadrat Wālā for a long time via correspondence but he was so spiritless about coming personally that despite his many years' bond with Hadrat Wālā, he only came once to meet him a long time ago and that too just for a day or two. Despite his friends insisting on him to go, he did not pay any attention to them and continued making feeble excuses about the hardships of travelling and so on. This is why although he adheres strictly to deeds, he did not develop affinity with Dīn. Consequently, when his condition changed, Hadrat Wālā said: "Affinity cannot be developed without spending some time [with one's shaykh]. The "colour" of Dīn does not come into a person. There is no consideration to mere evidential īmān. A person can waver and falter on the slightest reason. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

> Those who place a foundation on proof have legs of wood. And legs of wood are extremely weak.

The man had not developed affinity with Dīn. He merely had a customary Dīn. This is why it flew away by just one gust of wind."

Anyway, Hadrat Wālā was very concerned about his tribulation. The blessing of this was that Allāh *taʿālā* warned him via the unseen. He saw a dream in which someone said to him: "Hadrat Maulānā is displeased with you." He became curious and wrote to Hadrat Wālā immediately. His letter and Hadrat Wālā's reply are both quoted here:

Statement: It has been quite some time since I had been thinking of writing. In the meantime, I saw a dream in which someone is saying to me: "Hadrat Maulānā is displeased with you." Although this dream is not an absolute proof of anything, it is sufficient to make me curious.

Reply: I am surprised that you consider a dream to be sufficient but not the condition in which you are in while in a state of wakefulness. Do you not remember that incident in which you made some objections against the pure Sharīʿah, and when someone showed concern for your wellbeing, you did not value it in the least!? I am also one of them. You did not feel that I may be displeased, but when you received a "revelation" in the form of a dream, you feel curious!? The cause of this can be nothing but a deformation of your heart.

Statement: Although my heart and mind are saying no these days, I plucked the courage to sit and write this letter.

Reply: Had you not said no to Allāh and His Rasūl, your heart and mind would have been subservient to you.

Statement: Serious worries have surrounded me for the last three months. I felt that once my daughter is married, I will be absolved of one heavy weight. But I described the fate of that marriage to you in one of my previous letters.

Reply: I also said something about it previously. What value did you attach to what I said?

Statement: I also described the condition which I experienced subsequent to that incident. In reply to it Hadrat wrote: "If you had a physical illness for which it was essential for you to live with a doctor [be hospitalized], what would you do?" Obviously, in such a situation I will have to live with a doctor, but I could not come at that time and I do not see any way of leaving here at present.

Reply: If you had love for īmān, you would have found not just one but thousands of ways.

Statement: Although there are other reasons for my not coming, my lack of courage is a specific reason. Anyway, if there is any holiday, I will make efforts to come.

Reply: You may sweet-talk children with such promises. Now I will not call you until I make you plead.

Statement: The incident has affected my daughter so much that she has become completely dumb. She does not utter a single word, she only spits at us.

Reply: That is better, at least she is not making blasphemous statements.

Statement: I cannot describe the pain which I am experiencing at this distressful scene.

Reply: There is no need to say anything, your true colours have been exposed.

Statement: I request Hadrat to pray for her so that Allāh *taʿālā* may remove her from this calamity and decree something better for her whereby she can live her life in peace.

Reply: O Allāh! O Allāh! What calamity can be more serious than the calamity of unbelief? You have no concern about this? You do not request me to pray for this?

Statement: I too am in real need for your prayers because I am caught up in a maze at present.

Reply: Did you fall in it yourself or did someone cause you to fall?

I was overjoyed when I [the compiler] saw this letter and Hadrat Wālā's reply to it because – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – the door of rectification has been opened. I came immediately to Hadrat Wālā, expressed my joy to him and said: "Allāh willing, this reply will be most beneficial." Hadrat Wālā said: "I had written it solely for his benefit and out of concern for him. On such occasions abstaining from expressing your concern is essentially an act of concern. As for the results, this is not in my control. The Sharīʿah is certainly affectionate, but it is no one's slave."

> Those who wish to come may certainly come. Those who wish to leave, are free to do so. There is no compulsion, urging, supervision and policing in this court.

I wrote what I considered to be beneficial to him. Now even if it is harmful to him, I am neither responsible nor will I fret over it. This is similar to the concern which Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* had shown for Jibillah ibn Ayham Ghassānī. He wanted to take him to task in accordance with the pure Sharīʿah and treat his pride. When he became displeased and became a Christian, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* did not bother in the least. On one hand we see how his [Jibillah's] īmān left him over a trivial matter. On the other hand we see the īmān of Hadrat Kaʿb ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* which was so strong that although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had himself stopped talking to him and prohibited all the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* from talking to him – no one spoke to him and fifty days passed in this condition – yet it had no effect whatsoever on the strength of his īmān and his devotion.

So much so that the ruler of Ghassān who was a Christian had written a letter to him stating: "We have heard that your friend [Rasūlullāh] has treated you in this manner whereas you are a

very honourable man. If you come over to us we will accord you with a lot of respect." When the messenger came with the letter, he asked the Sahābah for directions to Hadrat Kaʿb. No one dared give him directions verbally, they merely pointed with their hands. Look at the level of obedience of the Sahābah and their caution! Although they were prohibited from speaking to Hadrat Kaʿb, they considered it careless to even speak to the messenger about him. Now look at the strength of Hadrat Kaʿb's īmān. When the messenger handed the letter over to him, he burst out crying after reading it and said to himself: "O Allāh! Have I become so worthless that even the unbelievers are wanting to take my īmān away?" He gave no verbal reply at all to the messenger. A lamp was burning at a nearby shop. He burnt the letter and so to speak, said to the messenger: "This is my reply to your letter." The messenger went back humiliated. The fact of the matter is that Hadrat Kaʿb's īmān was one of love, not a philosophical īmān."

I said to Hadrat Wālā: "How can this īmān of love be acquired? It is not within one's control!" He replied immediately: "Why are you making a statement like the Jabarīyyah? If you ask Allāh *taʿālā* and do good deeds with this intention, Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly give it to you. A major shortcoming in us is that we do good deeds with an empty mind. Whereas salāh, fasting, dhikr, Qur'ān recitation and all other good deeds are all there to perfect one's īmān. We must carry them out with the intention of perfecting our īmān. If we carry out actions with this intention and this in mind that we are asking Allāh *taʿālā* for perfection of our īmān through these good deeds, He will certainly bless us with perfect īmān."

Hadrat Wālā also said with regard to the letter which was quoted above: "Allāh willing, I hope to see some benefit from whatever I wrote." He added: "I did not write it to belittle him. How could I write it with the intention of belittling him when I see my own self surrounded from all sides by divine decree and will, all paths are closed to me and there is no way out? I can neither rely on my actions, knowledge nor my intellect. My friends and associates have very noble thoughts about me, but I do not consider myself possessing even one percent of it. As for my scolding and reprimanding people, it is done solely with the intention of rectification. Like when a royal lasher has to lash the prince as per the instruction of the king, he does not for even a moment think to himself that he is better than the

prince. He knows that he is merely carrying out the king's order."

Two of the countless incidents portraying unseen warnings and guidelines were related above. I am now quoting one more incident from *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā'* which also contains many such incidents.

One student writes: My wife had seen a dream that Hadrat Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the intercessor for the sinful, as well as Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*, all three had come to my house. Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* indicated an open Hadīth book towards me and said: "O Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, is this person from your ummat?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "Yes. This person if from my ummat." Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* then exclaimed: "Why did this person only explain these Ahādīth and not the remaining Ahādīth?" Thereafter, addressing Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in a loud voice said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn, you should explain the remainder of the Ahādīth." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then stated: "The ummat should be instructed in this manner like how the blind is taken by the hand and shown the path." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* also said that if this person maintains his correspondence with his spiritual mentor, he will not be deprived of good through the blessings of the correspondence. Ever since that day, this servant has taken a promise with himself that Allāh willing, I will always maintain my correspondence with Hadrat.

Look at the benefit of continually writing to Hadrat Wālā! This was emphasised previously. This is portrayed even by the instruction of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream. Countless seekers have witnessed this openly and continue to do so to this day. Their daily letters are more than ample testimonies.

Each seeker is treated according to his position

Allāh *taʿālā* instils in Hadrat Wālā's heart the type of treatment and interaction which is most suited to a seeker. Several incidents in this regard were related previously. Especially the one about a man who was inundated by whisperings of unbelief and – Allāh forbid – was having whisperings of

becoming a Christian. When he related this to Hadrat Wālā, he slapped him hard and pushed him aside, and said: “Get out you wretched fellow. Go and become a Christian right now. Islam certainly does not need you.” That one slap put an end to all his whisperings of unbelief for the rest of his life, and just that single slap was like a laxative which removed all the filth from inside. There are numerous incidents of this nature in which Hadrat Wālā’s Sharʿī reckoning and reprimanding proved most beneficial for the seekers. They themselves wrote to Hadrat Wālā and acknowledged this. Yes, the prerequisite is that the person must bear with Hadrat Wālā.

Those who have experienced it know fully well that the treatment which Hadrat Wālā meted out to a person was most beneficial to him. This is why every seeker must be convinced without any proof that this is most beneficial for me irrespective of whether I understand it at present or not, and whether I feel offended by it or not. Instead of being offended, one should ponder and reflect over it. One has to start pondering and reflecting over one’s rectification. He must understand that there is certainly a defect within him. He must then occupy himself in his rectification. Generally this is the stage where people do not have the courage and therefore remain deprived. As for those who respond with understanding, courage and forbearance by the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, they derive full benefit and become manifestations of the saying: “Toil for a few days and you can smile for the rest of your life.”

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, every warning of Hadrat Wālā is an atonement of sins or a cause of elevation in ranks for a genuine and intelligent seeker. It works as a whip which removes lethargy and apathy. And this too is Hadrat Wālā’s intention and focus. The following incident occurred just recently. There was a seeker who had been coming here on a regular basis and would stay over for many days at a time. He committed a very disturbing act when he went at the wrong time to meet and inform Hadrat Wālā of his arrival. Hadrat Wālā bore this transgression but the seeker remained seated there despite the adhān for ʿasr salāh being called out already. Hadrat Wālā was busy rounding up all his work and the seeker knew very well that it was not the time to sit with Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Wālā reprimanded him and asked: “Tell me, your objective of coming here is specifically to meet me or for rectification?” He replied: “For rectification.” Hadrat Wālā said: “Bearing in mind that you have been coming here since such a long time and you still have not been rectified, what is the benefit of coming here? Does this look like a place where you merely prostrate before an idol and then become heedless? Leave right now and don’t you dare come back here again.”

Hadrat Wālā then addressed those who were present: “People simply come here to pass their time like when they go to a show or exhibition. What is the benefit of such a coming? If after coming here a person does not even develop a concern for his rectification then this coming is futile. Errors of this nature are committed out of apathy, not mistakenly as he had offered an excuse in the beginning. Rectification is impossible without concern and seriousness.”

The above mentioned seeker was certainly seen to be reckless in certain matters which Hadrat Wālā did not even know about. However, Allāh *taʿālā* caused him to treat this seeker in a manner which was appropriate to his condition and which would direct him towards his rectification. The heart of a Qutb al-Irshād is a mirror and he is inspired and helped by Allāh *taʿālā.* Even when Hadrat Wālā reprimands a person unwittingly, it proves to be most appropriate and beneficial. There was a seeker towards whom Hadrat Wālā was a bit considerate. Hadrat Wālā was issuing a reprimand about dressing and adorning oneself but did not recognize him when he started reprimanding him [he though he was reprimanding someone else]. In the course of reprimanding he recognized who he was reprimanding but did not stop. Later on he said to us: “Had I recognized him from before, I would not have reprimanded him in this manner. Since I had already started, I did not consider it appropriate to stop. Anyway, it was good because he was reprimanded in this way.”

In short, the reprimand proved extremely beneficial to the seeker and he himself used to say to me: “When I pondered over it I certainly found this illness to a great extent in me.” He then focussed on rectifying his illness. Incidentally, I just recalled a statement which Hadrat Wālā made most recently. While speaking on a certain subject, he said with full force: “There were some spiritual masters in the past and there are

some servants even today who coincidentally opted for a wrong option in a certain matter. Later, Allāh *taʿālā* caused such conditions and changed incidents in such a manner that the option which they had chosen became the correct one in reality. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself had made this prayer for Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَدِرِ الْحَقَّ مَعَهُ حَيْثُ دَارَ

O Allāh! Enable the truth to turn with him in whichever direction he turns.

Look! Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did not say:

أدره مع الحق حيث دار

Turn him with the truth in whichever direction the truth turns.

When Hadrat Wālā said "and there are some servants even today", I felt within myself that based on experiences, he is referring to himself as per the following couplet:

> It is best to disclose the secrets of the beloveds in the midst of the statements of others.

Glad tidings on the Success of an operation

My wife was going to have a dangerous operation which caused us a lot of distress. She wrote to Hadrat Wālā requesting for his duʿā's and also made one or two despondent statements.

Hadrat Wālā – having placed his trust in Allāh *taʿālā* – wrote back: "Allāh willing, the operation will be successful and you will come here." We were extremely consoled and comforted by these words. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, the operation was successful. After some time I incidentally took a long leave due to which I stayed over in Thānah Bhawan for over two years. Similarly, in the course of writing this biography I suffered from a fever about two weeks ago. I became terrified by this fever and feared for my life. When I related this to Hadrat Wālā the next day, he laughed and said: "Allāh willing, you will not die now." My fears were alleviated completely when I heard these words and, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, my fever did not reach such dangerous levels. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

An arrangement from the unseen for Hadrat Wālā's protection

There was a time when political movements were making a lot of noise and clamour. Since Hadrat Wālā did not take part in any of them, those who thrived on insurrection sent various types of threatening letters to him. During that period there was almost always a Majdhūb lying near Hadrat Wālā's house. When one departed another would take his place. Hadrat Wālā said in this regard: "It is the opinion of some people and also my opinion to a certain extent that this is a spiritual arrangement for my protection. This opinion is supported by the fact that when these movements subsided, these people [Majdhūbs] also disappeared and were not to be seen." Hadrat Wālā also said: "Although I felt that they should protect me irrespective of whether I serve them in any way or not, they did not pay any particular attention to me."

Unseen arrangements

It was quite some time ago when a person from Sindh came with a back-scratcher as a gift. Hadrat Wālā said: "Look at the favours of Allāh *taʿālā* that He provides the instruments for such fine and intricate comforts. My back had become itchy since the past few days and there are certain places where it is very difficult to reach and scratch. Allāh *taʿālā* sent this back-scratcher which has made it so easy to scratch my back."

The desire of the heart is fulfilled

A Hindu Deputy Collector who had a lot of faith in Hadrat Wālā spoke in glowing terms about him to a British Collector. The latter wrote to Hadrat Wālā and expressed his intention of coming to meet him at the Madrasah. Hadrat Wālā went away to Rāmpūr on that day but he left instructions that when the Englishman arrives, he must be received warmly but no information about the Madrasah must be given to him.

Hadrat Wālā relates: "I had made all arrangements for a table, chair, etc. for him so that he does not experience any discomfort. However, it was something new to me and I felt some burden on my heart. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* made such arrangements whereby the Englishman deferred his intention entirely."

I [the compiler] say: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the following couplet manifested itself:

When you want it like this, Allāh *taʿālā* also wills it like that. Allāh *taʿālā* fulfils the wishes of the pious.

The story of a Hindu station master

Quite some time ago Hadrat Wālā went to Akbarpūr, district Kānpūr. It was raining on his return so as a precaution he came away to the Lālpūr station before ʿasr although the train to Kānpūr only used to leave there at 11pm. Lālpūr was a small station and since it was raining, even the sheltered area was filled with water. Incidentally, there was a straw mat which was laid out, so Hadrat Wālā sat down on it. Just then the Station Master arrived and took Hadrat Wālā into a room of the storehouse and seated him there. A judge of Akbarpūr had written to this Station Master to make sure Hadrat Wālā is not inconvenienced in any way. When night fell, the Station Master ordered one of the railway workers to light a lantern.

Hadrat Wālā suspected that the railway lantern would probably be lit for him and the Station Master has no right to do that. However, Hadrat Wālā could not tell him anything because he thought to himself that this man was a Hindu. If he were to tell him, he would think that many restrictions are placed on Muslims, he is providing comfort to him [Hadrat Wālā] but he is not accepting it. Hadrat Wālā then made duʿā' in his heart by saying: "O Allāh! You save him." The Station Master immediately caught the railway worker and said: "Look! Do not light the railway lantern, light my personal lantern." Hadrat Wālā relates: "I was astounded and thought to myself: This is a Hindu, how did he think of this? However, he was under Allāh's command, that is why He put this thought in his mind. I thanked Allāh *taʿālā*. Anyway, I would never have allowed the railway lantern to be lit for my benefit. I would have rather sat in the dark."

An excellent replacement for money that is sent back

Hadrat Wālā relates: "Whenever I returned any money which was not sent according to my principles – and this happened quite often – then in most cases Allāh *taʿālā* would give me something much better on the same day or the next day, and would ensure that some money is sent to me. If my self ever tried to confuse me into thinking that this second amount would have still come to me even if I had not returned the first amount, I would reply: Allāh *taʿālā* has knowledge of the

unseen. He knows from before hand that I will return such and such amount. This is why He sends its replacement from before hand. Had I not returned the first amount, He would not have sent the second amount and it would not have come to me.

Divine workings

This incident occurred just a few days ago. Hadrat Wālā's junior wife had planned to go to Pānīpat and his senior wife had planned to go to Gangoh. Neither of the two could tolerate troubling Hadrat Wālā by leaving him alone, nor could Hadrat Wālā impose on them. However, when Hadrat Wālā asked each of them separately about the dates of their departure and return, and did not make any alterations to their plans so that they may decide freely, he learnt that his junior wife will be returning one day before the departure of his senior wife.

After relating this incident, Hadrat Wālā said: "This is what you call Allāh's workings and divine benefactions." While on this subject, he also said: "A woman had expressed her intention of coming here. As per my norm, I wrote to her saying that once she has decided on the date, she must write back to me, inform me of the date and seek permission again. Imagine if she came at a time when both my wives are not at home, where would I have housed her? I then gave permission without any worry. These are the benefits of proper organization and system. I also added in my letter: 'Before you leave the station, you must inform me of your arrival and show this letter.' I did this so that she does not have to waste time searching for the house. These are all the concessions and considerations which I take into account yet I am maligned [and accused of being too strict]. The fact of the matter is that people are terrified by rules whereas there is ease and advantage in rules for people and for myself as well."

The story of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's tasbīh

Hadrat Wālā relates: "One of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's attendants came here after Hadrat's demise. He was in debt for 300 rupees. He had a tasbīh which had belonged to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. He said: 'Although an offer of 1000 rupees for this tasbīh will be less, I am prepared to give it to the person who gives me 300 rupees so that I can pay off my debt.' He also asked me to inform me of any of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's

attendants who will buy the tasbīh for this amount. I expressed my ignorance in this regard."

"At night the thought occurred to me that this person is going around trying to sell Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's tasbīh. I felt that it smacks of some type of disgrace for Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and wished that the tasbīh could come to me in some way. The attendant came to me with the tasbīh the next morning after the fajr salāh and said: 'I cannot show due respect to this tasbīh while I am on a journey, so I am giving it to you.' I replied: 'But I do not have 300 rupees.' He said: 'No, I have changed my mind. I am not going to sell it now.' I asked: 'Has this tasbīh come into your possession through the lawful manner?' He replied: 'Hadrat had given it to me.' I asked again: 'Did he give it to you when he was on his death bed or before?' He replied: 'He gave it to me long before his final illness.' I then accepted it and still have it to this day.

I [the compiler] say once again:

> When you want it like this, Allāh *taʿālā* also wills it like that. Allāh *taʿālā* fulfils the wishes of the pious.

Blessings in rectification

This is another glaring blessing of Hadrat Wālā: Initially he does not address a person directly, yet in most cases by Allāh's grace those who are associated to him turn their attention to rectification either very quickly or after some time. There were some whose outward condition was entirely not in accordance with the Sharīʿah. All they had was a special bond which eventually caused them to change completely, made them entirely religious, and resulted in the removal of the astonishment of those who merely look at the exterior.

Hadrat Wālā himself says in this regard: "My focus is on qualities not on actions because the latter can be changed in a single moment merely by changing one's will and intention. On the other hand, rectifying qualities is difficult to achieve even after several years. For example, a person who was never in the habit of performing salāh can become punctual in a single moment just by changing his will. However, it is difficult to remove pride after even many years of striving."

If anyone else had to adopt the independence and methodology of Hadrat Wālā's rectification of seekers, everyone would flee

from that person. It is really the blessing and pull of Hadrat Wālā's pining heart, affection and concern which causes hearts to be generally attracted and drawn to him. Even his rough and stern ways – despite being naturally offensive – settle in the hearts of those seekers who possess a sound temperament.

Hadrat Wālā's anger also has a special attraction. When he becomes angry at the time of teaching manners, a hundred kindnesses can be sacrificed for that anger. In appearance he may be one who displays sternness and wrathfulness, but in reality he is a manifestation of beauty and kindness. The reason for it is his sincerity. As I stated in a couplet:

> No matter what he says to me with his tongue, his eyes are conveying the message of love to me.

I recall a statement of my deceased peon who said: "When Hadrat Wālā becomes displeased at any person and then complains to those who are present, he says: 'Look, this is the condition of people', I am really attracted to the manner in which he says it." Hadrat Wālā himself says: "No matter what I say to any person – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I say it to him out of pain and concern for him. I never say it to belittle him or out of dislike for him. I do not hate any Muslim no matter how evil his actions may be. I certainly consider his actions to be evil, but not his being. Like a beautiful woman who applies soot to her face. The person who knows her will dislike the soot but will not consider her to be ugly. Instead, he will think to himself that once she washes it off with soap, the moon will appear. In the same way, every believer is certainly good in essence no matter how big a sinner he is."

I also looked at this blessing of Hadrat Wālā with astonishment: He would pose short questions in reply to the letters of seekers. These short questions seem to be difficult to understand yet they prove to be an elixir for the addressee. Most seekers have experienced that when they informed Hadrat Wālā of the illnesses of the self, through the blessings of his concise answers which largely emphasize the using of one's will and courage, the illnesses are treated. The utilization of one's will and courage which was previously almost impossible now becomes easy. The cause of this is nothing but blessing. If not, anyone else could have written similar answers. They will have no effect or an opposite effect.

These effects and blessings are also among the signs of Hadrat Wālā being a Qutb al-Irshād.

Nose bleeding

On one occasion Hadrat Wālā suffered from an extreme bout of nose bleeding which continued for several days. Many steps and measures were adopted but none could stop the flow of blood. Hadrat Wālā said: "I know the reason for it. During the last few days I had been selecting sections from *Tabaqāt Kubrā* and I came across the story of a certain personality who had the habit of inserting his finger in his nose while in salāh. He received inspiration from Allāh *taʿālā* to abstain from this habit and so he stopped. One day he forgot and began moving his finger towards his nose but his hand got stuck, it could not move further and could not reach his nose. It was as though Allāh *taʿālā* was steering him. After reading this story, I thought to myself that I also have the same habit and I therefore resolved to give it up. However, I forgetfully did the same thing one or two times. Immediately thereafter Allāh *taʿālā* caused my nose to bleed. It had started just after inserting my finger in my nose. All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for protecting His servants in this way."

Providing an attendant

Hadrat Wālā totally gave up taking any work from two of his very old workers. He used to ask them to carry out various tasks. They used to make many mistakes in carrying out their duties, thereby causing a lot of inconvenience to Hadrat Wālā. The biggest problem which he had with this was that he used to feel extremely remorseful after reprimanding and scolding them. One of them was a paid worker.

Hadrat Wālā then began carrying out his miscellaneous tasks on his own. However, Allāh *taʿālā* very quickly provided the means whereby he had a doorkeeper all the time. In addition to keeping guard, he used to carry out Hadrat Wālā's other tasks. Details concerning the reason for appointing a doorkeeper and the wisdom behind it were provided in a previous chapter. Initially, the attendants could only help at specific times. However, Allāh *taʿālā* provided this doorkeeper to carry out all of Hadrat Wālā's tasks on a full time basis. This brought a lot of comfort and ease to him. Hadrat Wālā said: "Look at Allāh's excellent arrangements and concern for His servants!"

The good death of associates

There are many incidents which depict the good death of Hadrat Wālā's associates. These demonstrate the blessings and acceptance of his spiritual lineage. Hadrat Wālā himself says: "It is a blessing of the spiritual family of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib that whoever pledged bayʿah to him either directly or indirectly, his end was a very good one by Allāh's grace. Although some associates remained in worldly occupations after becoming his murīd, by Allāh's grace their end was also like the end of Auliyā'."

Hadrat Wālā relates the story of one of his female murīds: "While she was in the throes of death, she mentioned my name and said: 'He arrived with a camel and is requesting me to get onto it.' She passed away after that and I did not even know about it. Allāh *taʿālā* sometimes steers and guides His servants in the form of a known person." Many of my Pīr Bhāis related strange and unique stories about the good death of their wives who were murīds of Hadrat Wālā. I had a brother-in-law who had went a long time ago to Kānpūr and pledged bayʿah at Hadrat Wālā's hands when Hadrat Wālā happened to go there. After he passed away, a righteous woman saw him in a dream in which he was saying: "It was a good thing which I did when I went so long ago to Kānpūr and became a murīd of Hadrat Wālā Maulānā. I am living in real comfort here."

May Allāh *taʿālā* also make me a true attendant of Hadrat Wālā and confer me with a good end through his blessings. May Allāh *taʿālā* resurrect me with Hadrat Wālā's attendants and bless me with his eternal companionship in Paradise. Āmīn. Āmīn.

A Few Divine Benefactions Recorded By Maulwī Hakīm Al-Haq Khān Sāhib

The effect of one hour's companionship

It is a clear and glaring blessing of Hadrat Wālā that whoever sits in a single assembly of his, in fact, for even just one hour with a true heart, love for this world will leave his heart and his bond with Allāh *taʿālā* increases. He perceives the freshness of the effulgence of īmān in his heart and experiences tranquillity and calm in it. There is no need for any specific testimony for this; every person who was in his company will testify to it.

From Kalīmullāh to Salīmullāh

Hadrat Wālā related on one occasion: "When I was in Kānpūr, there was a man by the name of Kalīmullāh. He was always ill. When someone told me about him, my mind immediately went to the literal meaning of the word. The word "kalim" means "an injury, a hurt". I therefore changed his name from Kalīmullāh to Salīmullah. Within a few days I was informed that he is very healthy and well. It was a good coincidence."

Although Hadrat Wālā considers it to be a coincidence, one who has faith in him will certainly consider it a blessing.

A dim-witted child becomes intelligent

Janāb Dāraughā 'Abdullāh Khān Sāhib is a famous personality of Bhopal and a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā. He used to say with absolute confidence: "I had a ten year old son who was extremely dim-witted and mentally retarded. I was quite saddened by this. He accompanied me to meet Hadrat Wālā on one occasion. On one of those days while we were with Hadrat Wālā, Hadrat Wālā was playing with him and jokingly touched his head with his own head. His mind became extremely sharp thereafter. He began studying very well and completed the Qur'ān extremely quickly."

Water is provided to a girl

Janāb Dāraughā 'Abdullāh Khān Sāhib also relates: "When Hadrat Wālā's junior wife was going for hajj, Hadrat Wālā accompanied her to Bombay. From there he proceeded to Gujarat. I was with. The junior wife's daughter was also with us. In the course of the train journey, the girl felt thirsty and asked for water. Hadrat Wālā said: 'If we get some water at a station we will obtain it for you.' Two or three stations passed but we could not obtain any water. The girl became restless out of thirst. We were still not sure about what to do when the train suddenly stopped for some reason in the middle of a field. When we looked out, we noticed that our coach was on a bridge which was over a stream where extremely clear and sweet water was flowing. We tied a water-can to a rope, lowered it, filled it with water and everyone was satiated. One of Hadrat Wālā's attendants said to him: 'This is clearly your supernatural feat.' He replied: 'It is not mine, it was the girl's who was feeling thirsty.'"

Increase in the pension

Janāb Dāraughā ʿAbdullāh Khān Sāhib related to me that after he received his pension, he came to Hadrat Wālā who asked him: "How much pension did you receive?" I replied: "22.10." He replied: "It is less." I said: "Whatever it is, I will try and make do." When I left Hadrat Wālā and returned to Bhopal, the government increased it to 25. I consider it to be solely the blessings of Hadrat Wālā."

The effect of a hurricane is removed

Janāb Maulwī Hāfiz Muhammad ʿUthmān Sāhib who was the most senior teacher at Madrasah Ashraf al-ʿUlūm Kānpūr and who, it is sad to say just passed away this week, related: "Hadrat Wālā was delivering a lecture at the Bans Mandī district of Kānpūr when a sudden hurricane tore forth. The people became worried. Hadrat Wālā read something, blew on his index finger and turned it in circles. The effects of the hurricane left the assembly immediately.

In the same assembly was a certain Maulānā who belonged to the Ahl al-Bidʿah and had been writing some articles against Hadrat Wālā. When the first gust of the hurricane blew, a bamboo canopy fell on him and injured him.

GLAD TIDINGS IN THE FORM OF DREAMS

Many righteous people who are both associates and non-associates of Hadrat Wālā have related many glad tidings about Hadrat Wālā. [These are known as Mubashshirāt]. Some of them are related here as examples of true dreams. The criteria for selecting these dreams is that only thirty random dreams will be selected in which the one who saw the dream had the honour of seeing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the dream. This prerequisite was laid down because – as per the Hadīth – there can be no doubt about confusion in such dreams.

When relating the dreams, the exact words of the one who saw the dream are quoted (except for a few short additions which are confined between brackets, and on one or two rare occasions, an ambiguous word was replaced by a clear one). However, brevity has been kept in mind. The sources of these accounts are:

1. Hand-written manuscript of *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā* part one (this has been published in several editions of *an-Nūr*).
2. Hand-written manuscript of *Asdaq ar-Ru'yā* part two (this manuscript is to be found in the office of Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm Thānah Bhawan and is to be published in the future).
3. *Tabwīb Tarbīyyatus Sālik* chapter seven (this was published recently).

The gist of Hadrat Wālā's foreword is quoted from the first book mentioned above. It contains many essential points related to dreams and also certain important matters which were considered when collating this chapter. For example, to abstain from copying an interpretation, and the reason behind not mentioning the names of some of those who saw the dreams.

بعد الحمد والصلوة:

فقد قال الله تعالى: لهم البشرى في الحيوة الدنيا وفي الآخرة.

روى الترمذي عن أبي الدرداء قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم في تفسيره هي الرؤيا الصالحة يراها المسلم أو ترى له. وفي الحديث للبخاري قالوا: وما المبشرات، قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: هي الرؤيا

الصالحة. وفي الحديث المتفق عليه عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: من رآني في المنام فقد رآني فإن الشيطان لا يتمثل في صورتي، الحديث. ثم قيل معناه: من راني على صورتي التي أنا عليها، وقيل معناه من راني بأي صورة كانت لأن تلك الصورة مثال لروحه المقدسة فإن الشيطان لا يتمثل بمثال على أنه مثال له، صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Several points are learnt from the above texts:

1. The general nature of the verse and the specification in the Hadīth unreservedly consider a good dream of a non-Prophet to be a glad tiding.

2. The Hadīth specifically considers such a dream to be more reliable in which a person enjoys the honour of seeing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

3. The Hadīth delineates the Sharʿī status of a good dream. It is not the result of whims nor an imaginary dream as is opined by some extremis philosophers. Had it been so, the Sharīʿah would not have termed it a glad tiding. It is neither a proof for injunctions nor can it affirm the lawfulness or unlawfulness of anything as is the belief of most laymen and some extremist scholars who behave like laymen. Had it been such, the Sharīʿah would not have restricted itself to referring it to as a glad tiding [but would have given it a higher status]. Thus, the essence of its status is that it strengthens the hope for mercy from Allāh *taʿālā*. In other words, the acquisition of what the glad tiding contains either immediately or at some time in the future. This becomes its interpretation.

4. The Hadīth considers the glad tiding to be general – irrespective of whether the person himself sees the dream or some other believer sees the dream about him.

5. As regards the difference of opinion which exists about whether Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is seen in his original form or not, this does not harm the effect of the dream because it is not used as proof, it merely strengthens the hope. Thus, even if the attribute is not present, the essence will suffice.

Initially the name and identity of the one who saw the dream was not mentioned because a dream is, to a certain extent, a secret and we should not divulge any person's secret. However, later on we felt that the wisdom behind divulging the person's

identity is stronger than not divulging it. The wisdom behind divulging it is that others can see whether the person is reliable or not. This is why the names were mentioned later on. You will therefore find the names at the end of some dreams and no names at the end of others. The interpretation was not quoted because the reader may consult whomever he has confidence in for an interpretation.

The dreams are now related. The first one was seen by Hadrat Wālā himself. The others were seen by other people.

With Rasūlullāh On Hajjatul Wadā'

A congregational salāh was being performed in a masjid similar to the Jāmiʿ Masjid of Kānpūr. The imām is Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. I am on the right side of the row. It seemed as if Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* came for the Farewell Pilgrimage and will soon depart for Madīnah Munawwarah. I also remember that it was Dhū al-Hijjah and he will depart from this world in Rabīʿ al-Awwal. Thus, three months remain of his life. The thought occurs to me that I too will accompany him. And for as long as he is present in this world, I will continue listening to his Ahādīth and recording them. (Hadrat Wālā)

On A Journey With Rasūlullāh

Hadrat Wālā, many days ago I saw a dream. There is a large assembly at some place and Hadrat Wālā is going there. I too am walking behind Hadrat Wālā. After proceeding for some time, I see some other people also proceeding. I asked the people: "Who are those people in the front?" They replied: "This one who is right at the front is Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*." Hadrat Wālā then joins Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* while I am at the rear. I see a river in front. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and all those who were with him cross it easily. I think about how I can cross it. Hadrat Wālā said to me: "You too come across in the same way as we did." I also crossed it and saw that the assembly is ready. (Sayyid Ahmad)

Conversing With Rasūlullāh

I saw Hadrat Wālā in a dream in which he is conversing with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Many other ʿulamā' are present but Hadrat Wālā is the only one who is asking

questions on behalf of everyone else and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is giving answers. I saw Hadrat Wālā closest to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. (Muhammad ʿAtīq)

Sitting With Rasūlullāh

I saw a dream before Ramadān. Hadrat Wālā is performing salāh in a masjid in the latter part of the night. I was overjoyed by this and thought to myself that I must look for someone who would intercede on my behalf to Hadrat Wālā to accept my pledge of bayʿah. The moment this thought crossed my mind, I went searching for someone. When I returned, I asked a person to intercede for me. He pointed and said: "There he is with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* deciding on a certain matter." When I reached there I saw a large group of people standing in a circle. Some are sitting in the front, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is present and Hadrat Wālā is near him. I tried very much to move forward through the assembly to meet Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* but failed. I saw a beam of light in the assembly and my eyes opened. (ʿAbd al-Qayyūm)

A Discussion With Rasūlullāh

Three or four days ago my wife saw a dream in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, Hadrat Gangohī and Hadrat Wālā were sitting in our house and engaged in a discussion.

The Acceptance Of Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān

I went to Garhī before ʿĪd. It was Thursday the 8th of Dhū al-Hijjah when I saw a dream. There was a pious elder in Madīnah Munawwarah speaking in praise of *Bayān al-Qur'ān* (the tafsīr written by Hadrat Wālā) by saying: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* repeatedly says: "The tafsīr of such and such verse is explained like this in *Bayān al-Qur'ān*. This is written in *Bayān al-Qur'ān*…"

The dream was long and I only recall this portion. I think that after hearing the elder saying this, I myself also heard Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* saying it, but I cannot recall this with certainty. I was still dreaming when the thought crossed my mind that Hadrat Wālā's intense sincerity was the reason why *Bayān al-Qur'ān* is so highly accepted in the court of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. (Zafar Ahmad,

Khānqāh Imdādīyyah, Thānah Bhawan, 12 Dhū al-Hijjah 1345 A.H.)

Rasūlullāh Attends A Gathering

I read Hadrat Wālā's lecture, *Maurid al-Farsakhī fī Maulid al-Barzakhī*, which is filled with wisdom. Through the blessings of this lecture I saw a dream in which there is an assembly of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is present and you [Hadrat Wālā] are also there. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. (Fadal Ahmad)

Standing Next To Rasūlullāh

In the course of my dhikr on the 16th night, Allāh *taʿālā* blessed me once again…It is the Khānqāh masjid, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* comes to the pulpit and you are standing right next to him on his right side…I feel more and more that Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shāh Nūr Muhammad Sāhib Jhanjhānwī *rahimahullāh* are also there to his left side, but I did not focus so much on these two. (Muhammad Najm Ahsan)

Acceptance Of The Article Titled: Ādāb Dhikr Maulid Sharīf

About three or four days ago I saw a dream in the morning. I am in an unknown place. A horse-like animal suddenly comes and stands at the wall of this place. People are saying to me that it has come for me. A short while later Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* comes on a horse-like animal and he has a veil over his blessed face. He comes close to me and his beauty is revealed to me. I feel as if I am not sleeping but fully awake. After Rasūlullāh's appearance, a type of curtain comes as a barrier between us. I cannot see him but can hear his blessed voice.

After that, either I said it or someone else who was present there said – I cannot recall very well: "There is a lot of commotion in Kānpūr nowadays. Many people are opposing Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. What is the basis of it?"[1] In replying to this question, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

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[1] During those days there was an uproar in Kānpūr against Hadrat Wālā's article titled *Ādāb Dhikr Maulid Sharīf* as contained in *Islāh ar-Rusūm*. (compiler)

addressed all who were present and said: “Whatever Ashraf ʿAlī has written is correct.” Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then turned to me and addressed me alone: “You must tell Ashraf ʿAlī that whatever he wrote is absolutely correct. However, it is not the appropriate time to write on such things.” Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said the second statement in a very low tone. I heard it but I do not think others who were present heard it. My eyes opened after that and it was the time for the fajr s̲alāh. This occurred on a Wednesday on the 2nd of Rajab. I described everything as I recall. (H̲āfiz̲ Munshī Sharāfatullāh, Chief Reader Pensioner, ʿAlīgarh) Rajab 1329 A.H. corresponding to October 1901. He was an employee in Kānpūr at the time.

Cleaning The Blessed Shoes Of Rasūlullāh

I have seen this dream that I had been to the Hijāz to meet Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. I saw H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī cleaning the blessed shoes of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with his blessed hand and saliva and thereafter presented them before Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* put on the shoes and went out of the masjid.

Sitting Next To Rasūlullāh

I saw a dream last night: Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* entered and we all started to stand up. He instructed us to remain seated. You [H̲ad̲rat Wālā] and whoever else was seated on the bedstead, began getting down or began moving from the main seat: Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked you to sit here and he too sat on one side of the bedstead. His blessed face was very effulgent and his blessed beard was absolutely white. He was neither too tall nor too short – his height was exactly like yours. A person in the assembly said: “I had seen Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* previously and he appeared different from what he is at present.” Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: “A person sees me in the form in which he is.” I clearly remember him saying this. My eyes opened immediately thereafter. Ever since that day I am experiencing a condition of absolute happiness and all whisperings have ended.

Acceptance Of Lessons

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is present in a certain place. Hadrat Wālā also enters. There are several students in front of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* A Hadīth book is placed before him.

Munājāt Maqbūl

I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream. There is a large gathering comprising mostly of my Pīr Bhāis. I got a place at the end of the assembly. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is delivering a talk in Arabic which I cannot hear at all. Towards the end, I heard this much of the talk: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: Just as the Qur'ān will complain to Allāh *taʿālā*:

يَا رَبِّ اِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوْا هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ مَهْجُوْرًا

O my Sustainer! My people consider this Qur'ān to be vain babbling.[1]

I will complain to Him saying: My ummah abandoned my Sunnah."

I was quite affected by this statement.

When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* completed his talk, I said: "O Rasūlullāh! My condition is extremely bad. For Allāh's sake please advise me." He asked: "What duʿā' do you read?" I replied: "*Allāhummā antas salām…*" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "You must continually read *Munājāt Maqbūl* which is compiled by Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib" (I do not remember whether he used the word "Maulānā" or not). I woke up after that and found myself extremely cheerful. (ʿAzīz ar-Rahmān)

Whatever He Writes And Says Is The Truth

I saw an assembly headed by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. At the end of the assembly people began posing various types of questions to him. When I got an opportunity, I too went forward and asked: "What do you have to say about Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Sāhib Thānwī and Maulānā Abū Bakr

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[1] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 30.

Sāhib Phirphirwī? Is everything which they say in accordance with the Sharīʿah?" He replied: "Both are extremely righteous people. Whatever they write and say is the absolute truth." (Amīr Hasan)

Beholding Rasūlullāh

I was lying down after sehrī when I saw a dream in which Hadrat Wālā was sitting in a circle with a few murīds. I also reached there. The moment you [Hadrat Wālā] saw me, you left in a certain direction. I followed you. I then see that both of us have reached the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in Madīnah Munawwarah. The grave split open in the centre and we both beheld Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* He looked at us and smiled. My eyes opened thereafter. (Muhammad Husn ad-Dīn)

Rasūlullāh Explains A Ruling

Let me relate a glad tiding to Hadrat Wālā…I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream – not after hoping to see him but solely out of Allāh's grace. Rasūlullāh's blessed head was uncovered, his hair was pitch black with a centre path and he was seated. No one apart from Hadrat Wālā, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and myself were present. I do not know about who was to my right and left. All I recall is that I was sitting in a subservient manner in one corner, looking at Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* continuously and crying profusely. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was explaining some ruling to you with full concentration and deliberation. I clearly recall him saying repeatedly: "This is what happened, this is what happened…" (Muhammad Ismāʿīl)

Remember This Name

It has been three years since I left my hometown and came here because I felt I ought to remain in the service of an erudite shaykh…Quite some time ago I was distressed about this when I saw a dream. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* came to me. He was accompanied by Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who had a hexagonal box with him. He instructed him to place it down. Some names were written on each side, and on the top were the words: *Rāqim Muhammad sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* (the writer, Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa*

sallam). The side of the box which was pointing to the East had your [Hadrat Wālā's] name. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* pointed to your name and said to me: "Remember this name." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was standing at the side which was pointing to the North while Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was standing at the side which was pointing to the South.

In The Court Of Rasūlullāh

It was the 19th of Dhū al-Hijjah, a Wednesday at about two in the morning when I saw a dream in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is accompanied by many murīds who are walking away from his left side. I am to his right, very close to his back. We are proceeding together until we reach a field or large enclosed area. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* stops there. You said to me: "This is the court of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, look at it carefully." I looked with my eyes wide open and saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his senior Companions on a large platform. A large group is standing in a circle. However, I see the entire assembly, the blessed platform, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his Companions in a hazy form like when someone looks at a silver foil [the image is not very clear]. I cried before you and said that I cannot see Rasūlullāh's face clearly. You said to me: "Engage in excessive dhikr – Allāh willing – you will be able to see him clearly." My eyes opened while I was still crying.

The Fortune Of Serving Rasūlullāh

I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream in the year in which I was in Daurah. You were also with him. You filled a water-jug with water, gave it in my hand and said: "Saʿīd, go and give this water to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for his wudū'." The dream was quite long so I am only relating its objective, i.e. after seeing Hadrat Wālā serving Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, I made an intention in the dream itself that I must make myself Hadrat Wālā's attendant. (Saʿīd ar-Rahmān Chātgāmī)

Rasūlullāh Arrives For The Jumu'ah Salāh

I saw this dream: There is a high rise masjid and people are arranging themselves in rows for the jumuʿah salāh. I am in

the courtyard of the masjid. Someone said to me: “That is Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.” Rasūlullāh’s blessed clothes were white but I cannot recall his appearance. Hadrat Wālā was performing the jumuʿah salāh in this masjid. This dream brought me joy which is beyond description. (Shihāb ad-Dīn)

Acceptance Of Hadrat Wālā’s Written Works

I saw a dream in the last Friday night of Ramadān. I was seated in some place when a bed appeared from above. It had four lamps and I could see just four people. They seated me on the bed and took me with them towards the forest. I could then see the ocean and the bed crossed over the ocean. We continued moving in this way until we saw a masjid. The bed stopped and we performed salāh there. There was a river flowing at the back of the masjid. My companions and I drank water from it. We went back to the bedstead and sat on it. It moved until we came to a bazaar where all types of goods were being offered for sale. My companions stopped the bed. There was a shop on which it was written: “Rashīdī and Ashrafī books are available here”. On reading this, I said to my companions, get me the books of Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib and Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. They gave me four books, seated me on the bed again and we proceeded until we could see a white building with green curtains from the distance. The bedstead stopped at the building and my four companions took me inside. It was extremely bright and illuminated.

I could see no lamp or light there. A carpet and pillow were laid out, and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with the four companions were there. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was made to wear white woollen garments. After wearing them, he sat down with his back against the pillow. I was standing at the entrance of the room in front of him. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* called me inside. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to him: “This is Sharīf Ahmad.” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said, call him in because he is the attendant of Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. I offered salām and sat down. I also shook hands with him. A glass of water was brought. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the four companions drank from it. They then gave it to me and I also drank from it. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then said to me: “You must continue acting on the

books of Maulānā Sāhib and do not stop reading them even if others stop you." (Sharīf Ahmad)

Acceptance Of Hadrat Wālā's Representatives Who Were Involved In Propagating Islam

I was honoured with a dream of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* on one occasion. Aʿlā Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* is seated in front of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, Maulānā Hakīm al-Ummat Thānwī is sitting behind him, and I am seated behind him [Hadrat Wālā]. A short while later, Maulānā Hakīm al-Ummat takes my hand, places it in the hand of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and says: "This is your servant who is involved in propagating Islam." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* took my hand in his blessed hand. I was overcome by crying and woke up in that condition. (Sayyid Nawāzish Husayn Sāhib, Rangoon Representative, as related by Maulwī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib)

Acceptance Of Written Works

I dreamt of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* on a Thursday night. I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* coming to my father's shop (i.e. Muhammad ʿUthmān Khān Sāhib, owner of Kutub Khānah Ashrafīyyah, Delhi who is also one of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā'). Hadrat Wālā's written works are in the hands of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. (ʿAbd al-Mannān Dehlawī)

Acceptance Of His Lectures

I saw a dream two nights ago on 20 Shaʿbān 1353 A.H. I live in Lucknow and near my district is another district by the name of Suhubtiyā Bāgh. Hadrat Wālā is delivering a lecture there and I also attend it. There is a steel palisade in the centre of the assembly. On one side is a very high bed on which a white carpet is laid. The bed is so high that a few stairs are needed to climb onto it.

Hadrat Wālā is delivering a lecture from the bed. It seems as if Hadrat Wālā has a sore throat causing his voice to be subdued and scratchy. However, whatever Hadrat Wālā is saying is understood very clearly. Those who are sitting near me are saying: "His voice is completely subdued. The crowd is so big, what could the people be hearing?!" Another person or I - I do

not recall very well – said: “Although he is speaking in such a soft tone before such a large crowd, if you listen attentively you can hear everything clearly without any difficulty. This is really his achievement” or he said “miracle”. The lecture was on the levels of Sufism and cognition, and conditions of those treading the path.

Hadrat Wālā was explaining that a seeker goes through several changes and conditions until he reaches the level of cognition. If he gets trapped in the different changes…when Hadrat Wālā reached this point, someone reproached him, meaning that he should not speak on this, he should rather continue. When the person reproached Hadrat Wālā, I immediately said: “Hey, why did he reproach him?” Another person said to me: “Brother! The one who reproached him is Hadrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.” After Hadrat Wālā was reproached, he stopped his lecture, got down from the bed, climbed down the stairs one at a time, went to the person who reproached him and asked: “I must not speak on this subject?” He replied: “No. Leave it aside and speak on something else. This is not the occasion for this topic, you must speak on it in some other lecture.” Hadrat Wālā replied: “Very well, I will be delivering another talk at such and such place.” The one who had informed me that it was Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: “Yes, you must speak about it there.” I then saw Hadrat Wālā seeking his permission and going back onto the bed (I can still picture how Hadrat Wālā descended from the bed, spoke to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and went back up again). At the time Hadrat Wālā was wearing a pair of black leather socks, he had a walking stick in his hand, and was wearing a long white kurtah which was reaching to his ankles. Anyway, Hadrat Wālā seated himself on the bed, spoke for a while and ended his lecture. (Qārī Nūr al-Haq)

He Is A Very Good Lecturer

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is present and our Hadrat Wālā and several other senior ʿulamā' are present in his service. It is a large place…all the ʿulamā' request Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to deliver a talk. He replies: “There are many ʿulamā' here who can deliver lectures.” The ʿulamā' request him again. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replies by pointing to our Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib *mudda zilluhu al-ʿālī* and says: “He ought to

deliver a lecture…he is a very good lecturer.” All the ʿulamā’ fall silent. (Jiyūn, 5 Shaʿbān 1353 A.H. on a Thursday night)

Acceptance Of His Associates

I saw a unique dream on a Thursday night…I am with Hadrat Wālā and a large number of Pīr Bhāis are present. They are all accompanying Hadrat Wālā for hajj. We stayed over at a house which appeared to have a double-storey. There are many other people there. When we all settled down, someone whom I did not recognize said: “Here is Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.” We all, including Hadrat Wālā, began looking at him…Someone then announced that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* wants to perform salāh. It appeared to be fajr time. We all attendants of Hadrat Wālā and others began performing wudū’.

Once we completed wudū’ we began forming rows. Someone then announced: “All the murīds of Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib must be in the front row.” We all came out of the different rows and went to the front row. After the salāh we went out to a field with Hadrat Wālā. Only Hadrat Wālā’s attendants were there with him. The moment we reached the field, everyone fell to the ground crying. Hadrat Wālā was still standing. After seeing all this, my alarm went off, my eyes opened and it was four o’ clock in the morning. I got up for tahajjud. (Shihāb ad-Dīn, 2 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1352 A.H.)

With Rasūlullāh And Hadrat ʿUmar

I saw a dream a few days ago. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and you [Hadrat Wālā] have come into my house. No conversation took place. Another person introduced each person to me by saying: “This is Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, this is Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and this is Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī.” (ʿUmarjī Āminjī Kambūlī, district Bharūch)

Glad Tidings Of Paradise

I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream when I was still a minor and was studying *Nahw Mīr* and other similar books. He had a beautiful and striking appearance. A bed was prepared and laid out for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in one of the levels of the house of Maulānā Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa*

sallam was wearing coloured garments. Some people were asking him: "What is there in store for us? Paradise or Hell?" He was conveying the glad tidings of Paradise for the Muslims. He finally proceeded to that level of the house where the bed was laid out and sat on it. Maulānā Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib was informed of his arrival. Maulānā came out of his house and embraced Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. I then went forward and presented myself before him while there was no one else there. I also asked him: "Where is my abode?" He gave me the glad tidings of Paradise.

Emulating Rasūlullāh

I saw three dreams when I was with Hadrat Wālā in Kānpūr. In one of them I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* walking on a certain path. Hadrat Wālā and myself were walking behind him on the same path. Basically we were all walking together.

Sitting With Rasūlullāh

I saw a dream last night. There is a huge field in Makkah where Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is present. Hadrat Wālā comes and sits to his right. There is a huge crowd sitting in a circle comprising of many Sahābah. However, I can only see Rasūlullāh's face clearly. His face was reddish in colour, extremely elegant and he had a white topī on his head. I came forward and expressed my wish to pledge bayʿah. He said to me: "Come and sit in front of him so that I too can see what type of murīd you are." I sat very respectfully and fearfully, but a smile was coming up. I stopped it and sat even more respectfully.

I went a little forward and expressed my wish to pledge bayʿah. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* began taking the pledge from me. He had not commenced as yet when Hadrat Wālā said to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: "Take a promise from him that he will not sit on a chair." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to me: "Promise me that you will not sit on a chair." He also took some other promise from me but I cannot recall it. I pledged that I will not sit on a chair. (Munshī Sajjād Sāhib)

The date, 4th Dhū al-Hijjah, is written at the end of the letter but the year is not written. Hadrat Wālā's interpretation as

regards the pledge to abstain from sitting on a chair is also noted in the letter. He says that it is essentially a prohibition of desiring status even if it is without a chair. It does not necessarily mean that he must not sit on a chair.

The Munshī Sāhib had given up sitting on a chair but began sitting on it once again after reading Hadrat Wālā's interpretation.

Note 1:

Some of these glad tidings are in favour of Hadrat Wālā in the midst of dreams of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In addition to this, there are many glad tidings in favour of Hadrat Wālā given in the midst of other personalities. I came across the names of some of the personalities after a mere perusal of the sources and quote them here:

1. Hadrat ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām*.
2. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.
3. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.
4. Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.
5. Hadrat Imām Husayn *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.
6. Hadrat Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*.
7. Hadrat Khwājah Muʿīn ad-Dīn Chishtī *rahimahullāh*.
8. Hadrat Sultān Nizām ad-Dīn Auliyā' *rahimahullāh*.
9. Hadrat Shaykh ʿAbd al-Quddus Gangohī *rahimahullāh*.
10. Hadrat Khwājah Bāqī Billāh *rahimahullāh*.
11. Hadrat Imām Rabbānī Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh*.
12. Hadrat Miyānjī Nūr Muhammad Sāhib Jhanjhānwī *rahimahullāh*.
13. Hadrat Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Majdhūb Pānī Pattī *rahimahullāh*.
14. Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh *rahimahullāh*.
15. Hadrat Hāfiz Muhammad Dāmin Sāhib Shahīd *rahimahullāh*.
16. Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib Thānwī *rahimahullāh*.
17. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.
18. Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh*.
19. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*.

20. Hadrat Maulānā Fatah Muhammad Sāhib Thānwī *rahimahullāh.*
21. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Ilāhābādī *rahimahullāh.*
22. Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh.*

Note 2:

Those who would like to study more glad tidings may refer to the references which were quoted at the beginning of this chapter in the prelude.

تم هذا الباب، فالحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات

HONOURABLE WIVES

Hadrat Wālā has two wives. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* both are extremely affectionate, concerned about the poor, reliant on Allāh *taʿālā*, content, hospitable and most ready to serve Hadrat Wālā. Details about his second marriage have been personally penned by him in his book, *Islāh Inqilāb Ummat*. His senior wife was certainly anguished by his second marriage but – all praise is to Allāh *taʿālā* – her feelings are now clear. In fact, solely out of her concern for Hadrat Wālā's comfort, she relinquished some of her rights very happily and gave them over to his junior wife.

Justice Between The Wives

Hadrat Wālā may have experienced some initial difficulties in establishing the high level of justice and considering its most minute details. However, since his especially fastidious and cautious about fulfilling the rights of fellow humans, he has always been concerned and particularly worried about it. Eventually, as per Allāh's promise:

وَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنْ بِاللّٰهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ

Whoever believes in Allāh, He shows the path to his heart.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* simplified all difficulties and the intricate details about the method of establishing justice were understood by him. These principles of justice are both rationally and practically very easy. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, he does not experience any problems now. Some people said to Hadrat Wālā that he has opened the doors to entering into a second marriage. Bearing in mind how fastidious he was about ensuring justice, he replied: "No, I have not opened the doors; I have actually shut them because when a person sees how particular he has to be about equality and justice, he will find it too difficult and will not be able to pluck the courage for taking on a second wife."

Based on his personal difficulties in establishing justice, Hadrat Wālā wrote in his *Islāh Inqilāb Ummat* with reference to

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[1] Sūrah at-Taghābun, 64: 11.

a second marriage: “I was unable to do it. You must be cautious in this regard.” I recall a statement of Hadrat Wālā with regard to his fastidiousness as regards the finer points of justice. He had made this statement when he had just entered into his second marriage. He said: “I consider it unjust to even think of the other wife while I am with one wife. After all, this would result in a decrease in my attention to the wife whose turn it is. It will entail trampling on her rights. Similarly, I now keep my clothes in the Khānqāh. If I were to keep them in one house, the other wife would have an excuse to complain and say that I do not have as much attachment to her as I have with the other.”

One can gauge from the above the importance which Hadrat Wālā attached to justice and equality. Whatever Hadrat Wālā gives to the two – whether cash or kind – he ensures it is equal. When it comes to dividing things which are to be weighed, he has a most accurate scale suspended in front of his sitting place. He jokingly refers to it as the “Scale of Justice”. He has meals in one house on one day, and in the other house the next. In Ramadān, he opens his fast with his senior wife and has sehrī with his junior wife.

The Dowry

Although the payment of the dowry is generally not practised in his extended family, Hadrat Wālā paid it to both wives. In fact, Hadrat Wālā constantly says: “Even if a woman pardons the dowry, the self-respect of a man demands that he must still pay it.” Hadrat Wālā’s senior wife had gladly absolved him of paying the 5 000 rupees as dowry but he still paid it. He feels that this is the preferred explanation of the verse:

وَاَنْ تَعْفُوْ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى

If you [men] forgo, it is closer to piety.[1]

Self-Respect And Favours

Hadrat Wālā has so much of self-respect and self-honour that he cannot tolerate being indebted to his wives for a single rupee. At the same time, he does not allow any ill-feeling whatsoever. Subsequently, he used to give to each wife the

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 236.

expenses for running her house, and over and above that, he would give them an amount for his expenses. When they both insisted that this does not seem appropriate, he stopped it but would still give 1 000 (more or less) to each one over and above the allotted share. Hadrat Wālā used to divide his income in three, one share each for each of his wives, and one share for himself. He did not say anything when he gave them the above amount but later said to them in a light-hearted tone: "I gave this amount as rent for the house and my food after calculating it until the year 1370 A.H."

He pays the rent to them because he had given the houses to both of them. And since he is enjoying the benefits of both houses, he felt he must pay them. Similarly, before he could enter into a second marriage, he had got bangles to the value of 500 rupees made for his senior wife. He thought to himself: I am enjoying the benefits of her house, and as per the principle:

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْاِحْسَانِ اِلَّا الْاِحْسَانُ

What is the reward of kindness but kindness?[1]

I am paying her back in the form of these bangles. Although it was not obligatory according to the Sharī'ah to pay this amount because he was staying there by mutual consent, Hadrat Wālā is so independent that he cannot tolerate taking such a favour from anyone, especially from his wives who are actually more deserving of being shown favours, and not to take favours from them.

Concern For The Comfort Of His Wives

As far as possible, Hadrat Wālā does not place any burden on his wives. So much so that he would not even make a request for a specific type of food except very rarely. However, if they insist, he would not hurt their feelings and would respond by saying: "Okay, you give me a list of foods which you can cook easily and I will choose the one I like." Subsequently, when a few foods are named, he chooses one. In short, Hadrat Wālā has a lot of self-respect in him but not to the extent of estrangement.

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[1] Sūrah ar-Rahmān, 55: 60.

Leniency And Informality

Hadrat Wālā is extremely soft-hearted, lenient and informal with his wives. I learnt from my wife with regard to both of Hadrat Wālā's wives that sometimes when Hadrat Wālā returns home and he finds them engaged in some work, he says to then in a very soft and kind tone: "I am busy the entire day and come to you with a view to giving my mind a rest but you carry on with your work."

Although Hadrat Wālā gets very little time to go to his wives because of his many Dīnī activities, he makes it a point of going to visit them. He very often goes before maghrib, speaks to them for a few minutes and then returns immediately for the maghrib salāh. I personally heard Hadrat Wālā saying: "Although there are times when I rarely get an opportunity to go see them, these poor women never complain. I am free to remain engrossed in my work."

I also heard my wife saying that Hadrat Wālā speaks in a very soft tone to his wives, and jokes a lot with the children of their relatives or with the children of the women who come to visit his wives. In short, as long as he is at home, he is extremely jovial and informal. However, when he has to reprimand about something, he will reprimand without hesitation. While on the subject of informality, I heard Hadrat Wālā saying on one occasion: "Sometimes I sit near the fire and have my meal, and also bring the earthen water-pot by myself."

I also heard my wife saying that if there is no water on the table-cloth, then instead of asking anyone to bring it, Hadrat Wālā would get up himself and pour it from the earthen water-pot. When my wife saw that Hadrat Wālā was finding it difficult to pour the water himself – because the water-pot was so heavy – she felt like getting up and pouring it for him but purdah prevented her from doing that. To sum up, Hadrat Wālā is always jovial and light-hearted at home. He does not live like a person who wants to be served all the time. He pays a lot of attention to his wives and has an extremely strong bond with them. However, when he leaves after a little while and returns to the Khānqāh, he becomes so occupied with his Dīnī activities as if he has no bond or connection with anyone. We learn from this that he fulfils the right of each place and occasion while his essential bond is with the True Beloved.

It was quite some time ago when Hadrat Wālā was probably overtaken by a specific condition and told me this as a secret: "Sometimes I am so disinclined to all contacts and relations that although it is only on the level of a whispering and an apprehension, I feel that the little bond which I have with my wives should also end. However, no sooner this whispering comes to me, I make an ardent duʿā' for Allāh *taʿālā* to give them long life so that I may make up for that whispering and no possibility of danger remains because the power of one's thoughts can also harm others." Similarly, he also told me the following as a secret: "At first I could not understand how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used laugh and joke with his pure wives despite his absolute awe as regards the truth. However, the impossibility of it has decreased and I have started to understand that this is indeed possible."

Good Treatment

Hadrat Wālā generally emphasises good treatment of wives and when he hears of a person who is harsh and strict, he is severely displeased and says: "The poor women are always at the mercy of their husbands. Who else do they have apart from their husbands? Therefore one must always be merciful towards them. Indian women are generally extremely loyal to their husbands. To be harsh with them will be even more merciless. Moreover, they are generally chaste like the damsels of Paradise who are described in the Qur'ān as women whose gaze is downcast. Rarely would you find a man who did not have whisperings of other women. On the other hand, almost all noble women do not even experience a whispering of another man."

Bearing Hardships For The Comfort Of Wives

Hadrat Wālā is very much concerned about the comfort and wellbeing of both his wives. He bore every type of difficulty and expense in seeking medical treatment for them, travelled to distant cities for this purpose and personally accompanied them for seeking medical treatment. There were occasions when he had them hospitalized in women's clinics for their treatment while he pitched a tent outside and stayed there. On one occasion his senior wife fell from the roof. At the time Hadrat Wālā was performing the Sunnah of fajr salāh in the Khānqāh. He was informed while he was in salāh. He broke his

salāh immediately, proceeded to his house and tended to her. Once he completed all necessary arrangements, he returned and performed his fajr salāh. It was obligatory on him to break his salāh in such a condition.

كما في الدر المختار، باب إدراك الفريضة: ويجب القطع لنحو إنجاء غريق أو حريق. في رد المحتار: قوله ويجب أي يفترض، قلت: ولا شك أن الواقعة المذكورة نحو الإنجاء المذكور لاشتراك كل منها في كونه صونا عن الإهلاك.

Glory to Allāh! Look at how he fulfilled rights while upholding the limits of the Sharī'ah. If not, a "dry" ascetic would not even stop his dhikr – let alone salāh – on such occasions and would consider it against asceticism to break his salāh or stop his dhikr. This would certainly be considered to be transgressing the limits of the Sharī'ah.

In short, Hadrat Wālā treats his wives excellently and emphasizes this point on others regularly. We had related previously that a seeker had written to Hadrat Wālā and complained about his wife's baseless complaints and criticisms. He had added: "I fear I might cross the limits." Hadrat Wālā prohibited him and asked him to regard her as Satan's starling and imitator, and to consider it as an amusement. In this way his anger towards her will disappear.

Concern For His Wives' Comfort After His Demise

Based on the fact that it is Sunnah to be concerned about one's wife's comfort after one's death (there is an explicit Hadīth in this regard in *Tirmidhī Sharīf* and it is also a natural concern), Hadrat Wālā made a bequest to his closest and most special associates about seeing to his wives' wellbeing after his demise. Allāh willing, this will be related in the chapter on bequests.

BEQUESTS

Allāh *taʿālā* sent Hadrat Wālā into this world as a personality who possesses many excellent qualities collectively, an embodiment of rectitude and guidance, a Hakīm al-Ummat and a reviver of the Muslim community. This is why – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – there is no important department of Dīn which he did not look at academically and practically with a view to rectification and reformation, and which he did not show the correct course of action to the Muslim community in accordance with the original sources of Dīn [Qur'ān and Hadīth]. This is most prominently displayed by a mere look at his many and varied written works. From among these essential departments of Dīn is the issue of bequests regarding which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* went to the extent of emphasizing it by saying that if a person has anything regarding which he has to make a bequest, he must not pass the night without having written the bequest down and kept it with him.

Publication Of Bequests

In emulating the above instruction of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, Hadrat Wālā recorded detailed bequests with regard to his obligatory and non-obligatory duties and published them. He still publishes them periodically. This becomes clear from his book *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* and its several addendums. In addition to his total bequests which are mentioned in *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* and its addendums, he printed his partial bequests. These were published under the title *al-Istihsār lil Ikhtisār maʿa Taqallubāt al-Atwār* in the Safar 1346 A.H. issue of *an-Nūr*. He also published a general apology titled *al-ʿUdhr wa an-Nadhr* in Ramadān 1344 A.H. which is actually in reference to one of his partial bequests. In it he makes a general address to all those who have rights over him.

A study of all these bequests clearly and expressly demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's high level of caution, extreme abstinence and piety, lofty stage of transparency in transactions and astounding administrative acumen. It is an example of how a Muslim ought to be prepared for death at all times, live a pure life and depart from this world as a pure and clean person. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire all Muslims to emulate

Hadrat Wālā and enable them to focus full attention on clarity in transactions which – nowadays – are generally disregarded. Not only the laymen, even the scholars and the elite do not attach as much importance to this department as they ought to. This is most sad.

Emphasising Clarity In Transactions To His Associates

Apart from his own personal fastidiousness in this regard, he constantly emphasises on his associates to be very particular about their transactions. When some seekers wanted to live in the Khānqāh permanently, he asked them: "Do you have any rights which you owe to anyone." When he was informed that they did have, he asked them to go back, clear all matters and then return.

Consequently, one courageous seeker who was quite poor undertook a lengthy journey to Allāhābād on foot solely for the sake of clearing all matters and transactions. He then returned on foot and settled down in the Khānqāh. He is still living here. There was another seeker who neither had any inclination to his wife nor could he fulfil her conjugal rights. When Hadrat Wālā learnt that he had left his wife with his elder brother, Hadrat Wālā instructed him not to leave her suspended like that. He must rather separate himself from her and return. Hadrat Wālā only commenced his training and instruction when he came back after divorcing his wife. Similarly, Hadrat Wālā does not accept the bay'ah of farmers who inherited land until they go and clear their rights of hereditary occupancy.

The Story Of A Former Thief

There was a poor man who had committed many thefts in the past. Hadrat Wālā instructed him to go and obtain a written pardon from all of them. He went and obtained a written pardon from each one. In fact, he even obtained a pardon from a Baniyā[1] from whom he had stolen 500 rupees on a train. The Baniyā wrote: "I pardon him for Allāh's sake." Since the man was a true seeker, all those from whom he stole pardoned him happily. As a further precaution, Hadrat Wālā instructed him thus: "Bring all the reply envelopes. I am personally going to write to them and ask them whether they really pardoned you

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[1] One who belongs to the Hindu merchant class.

or you fabricated these replies.” The man brought the envelopes without hesitation. Hadrat Wālā gauged from his reaction that he was honest so he did not see the need to investigate the matter any further. Hadrat Wālā offered to buy these envelopes from him so that he does not have to fall into unnecessary need for compensation [in the Hereafter] but the man replied: “I myself need them for my business needs.”

Unparalleled Concern For Upholding Rights

We see how much of importance Hadrat Wālā attaches to the preservation of other’s rights. This quality is from among his peculiar attributes. If even a little hot water of the masjid remains after performing wudū’, he goes and returns it to the bathroom so that this wealth of the masjid is not wasted. His attention to the upholding of rights is the actual reason behind the previously mentioned principles as regards total and partial bequests. In addition to this, he does it to serve as a guidance for others. He has provided detailed guidelines in *al-Istihdār* which contains his total and partial bequests. He explains how a bequest is to be drawn up and arranged, and how daily changes must be made to it. Another reason for doing this is so that it may serve as a sample for others.

We will quote it here in its entirety. His general apology will also be quoted because it will also serve as a sample. These two will be quoted in their entirety because only certain specific random bequests will be quoted from his *Tanbīhāt* and its several addendums. It will be too much to quote all. Allāh willing, once the reader peruses through them, he will clearly gauge how particular Hadrat Wālā was with regard to upholding rights, clarity in transactions and safeguarding trusts from confusion and interpolation. The reader will also notice his fine observation of minute details which, although they are so glaring, are not considered nowadays even by the scholars – except whom Allāh wills.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and by the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā maintains all his affairs like a clear mirror all the time. This is based on the saying: “This is probably my last breath.” Hadrat Wālā does this so that he himself may be absolved from being taken to task before Allāh *taʿālā*, and others too may not experience any complications about any matter after his demise. This is the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

The texts which I promised are now quoted in sequence to the reader. First, selected bequests will be quoted from *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* and its addendums. This will be followed by quoting *al-Istihdār* and *al-ʿUdhr wa an-Nadhr* one after the other in their entirety. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Selected Bequests From Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat And its Addendums

Prelude to the book by Hadrat Wālā

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This insignificant Ashraf ʿAlī expresses the fact that these are a few precautions and clarifications which are presented in the from of a bequest. I am doing this as a reminder to myself and others of the words of Allāh *taʿālā* when He says:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَّيَبْقٰى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ

All who are on earth are bound to perish. The countenance of your Sustainer will remain in all its majesty and glory.[1]

And the words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when he says:

أَكْثِرُوْا ذِكْرَ هَادِمِ اللَّذَّاتِ الْمَوْتُ

Engage in the excessive remembrance of the destroyer of pleasures – death.

The order to prepare a bequest

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

مَا حَقُّ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ لَهُ شَيْءٌ يُوْصِيْ فِيْهِ يَبِيْتُ لَيْلَتَيْنِ إِلَّا وَوَصِيَّتُهُ مَكْتُوْبَةٌ عِنْدَهُ[2]

A Muslim who has something for which he has to make a bequest has no right to sleep for two nights without his bequest written down and kept with him.

This Hadīth demonstrates the obligation of writing a bequest in respect of obligatory rights. From the general nature of its words, the desirability of recording a bequest in respect of non-obligatory rights are also learnt.

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[1] Sūrah ar-Rahmān, 55: 26-27.

[2] رواه الشيخان عن أبي عمر رضي الله عنه.

My present situation

I am close to 50 years of age. That is, I will turn 50 on 4 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1330 A.H. My present condition is as described in the following couplet:

> O you who have passed the age of 50 and is still asleep! If only you had done something in these five days.

A few years ago I had quoted the following couplet:

> Forty years of your valuable life have passed yet even your temperament has not changed since your infancy.

The need and benefit of a bequest

In the light of the above Hadīth and couplets, I felt it obligatory in respect of certain matters and appropriate in respect of other matters to note short bequests as per my present condition and to make a general announcement in this regard. Together with its benefit to me, it will be of benefit to others both by way of knowledge and to serve as a lesson. By studying the detailed bequests, essential and subsidiary wisdoms and advantages will be gauged. It is also possible that others may emulate me in this regard. In such a case, the cause of obedience is an act of obedience in itself.

An appeal to friends for du'ā'

I appeal to all my friends to seek forgiveness for all my minor and major, intentional and unintentional sins. I request them to pray for the removal of all blameworthy habits and characteristics which are in me.

A request for clearing all matters from those who have rights over me

Due to some of my bad characteristics, some servants of Allāh *taʿālā* experienced verbal and physical afflictions in my presence and my absence. Some rights have also been trampled.[1] Whether the rightful people know about them or

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[1] Similarly, if anyone has a monetary claim over me, he must inform me and I will pay him or he may pardon me. This is especially so when there were those incidental occasions when the stamps of those who wrote letters to me – stamps costing one or two rupees – were found mistakenly with the refuse. Because I could not establish the

not, I humbly appeal to everyone – juniors and seniors – to pardon me with all their heart solely for Allāh's sake. Allāh *taʿālā* will overlook their shortcomings. I too pray for them to Allāh *taʿālā* to bestow them with pardon and wellbeing in both worlds. There are many virtues for pardoning the shortcomings of a person who apologizes. If they do not have the heart to pardon me, then as per the ruling of the Sharīʿah, they must take a recompense from me. For Allāh's sake, they must not leave the recompense for the Hereafter because I am in no position whatsoever to bear that.

I pardon the shortcomings of others

As for the shortcomings of this nature [mentioned above] which have been committed by others against me, I gladly pardon them for their past and future shortcomings solely for Allāh's pleasure and with the hope of having my own shortcomings pardoned.

A bequest to my biographer

Most unreal praises are popularized in matters of love. This is why I do not like for my biography to be written. If any person is over-enthusiastic in this regard and other religious and scholarly people permit it, the biographer must consider it obligatory to be extremely cautious in his narrations. If not, I absolve my self from them.

Clarifications with regard to written works

There are certain places in my written works where I committed slip ups as regards brevity, lengthiness or overlooking a point. I do not recall them at present. I present two rules in this regard.

(1) Correction of a mistake in a former written work can be learnt from a latter written work.[1] I made it a point of noting

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owners, they were spent as lost items. However, the rightful owners have the right to approve of the way in which they were spent or inform me and I will pay them back.

[1] In *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* (Niẕāmī, Kānpūr edition) page 47 under the title "Etiquette of an Assembly" I had written: "Do not sit behind anyone nor face your back to anyone." This point is correct in itself because in the first case it entails offending a Muslim. In most cases, sitting behind another creates pride. In the second case it entails scorning a Muslim and being disrespectful to him. However, the Ḥadīth which

the date at the end of each of my works. Thus, it is easy to differentiate an earlier work from a later one. From here, one can also learn that if there is any contradiction between anything which I wrote, the latter view must be considered to be mine.

(2) Doubtful places can be investigated from erudite scholars and their opinion must be given preference over mine. Similarly, if anyone comes across a doubtful fatwā of mine, he must do the same thing because I myself realized the error of some of my answers after having written them. On learning the address of the questioner, I informed him. However, in the case of not being able to obtain his address or the possibility of the questioner not preserving my corrected answer, the possibility of falling into error still exists. I am therefore mentioning this as a precaution. I now quote the places where partial errors were committed.

1. In *Bahishtī Zewar* I had stated that there are four rakʿats Sunnah after the ʿishā salāh. The correct ruling is that there are two rakʿats Sunnah and two rakʿats optional.

2. In *Bahishtī Zewar* it was stated that the Ayyām Bīd are the 12th, 13th and 14th of each month. The correct dates are 13th, 14th and 15th.

3. When writing about the bidʿah acts of observing 10 days, 40 days, etc. [after the death of a person] in *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* and *Bahishtī Zewar*, I had written "while considering this practice to be necessary". Someone may misconstrue this and think that it is permissible to observe these practices if they are not considered to be necessary. Let it be known that this condition is incidental and not cautionary. The rule is that no matter how these acts are observed, they are bidʿah acts.

4. The following was written in *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* with regard to lighting lamps on graves: "To light a lot of lamps." Like the

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was used as a reference – as mentioned in the footnote – does not state this explicitly. Rather, I extracted this point from it. It is really quite far-fetched. When it was printed later on in Lahore by Naulkishore Printers, the point was rephrased as follows: "Do not sit in a distinguished place in an assembly unnecessarily merely with the intention of showing off your position." This meaning is what is clearly meant from the Hadīth. Those who have the previous edition must make the necessary change.

previous point, it must be understood that it is a bidʿah to light even a single lamp.

5. In *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* it is stated that taking rupees on credit is totally prohibited. However, there are some details in this regard. If the transaction is on complete rupees (without any single units, e.g. full rands and no cents), and the person has the full amount at the time of the transaction, but did not give it over to the debtor at that time – for whatever reason – it will be permissible. However, if either of these two conditions are not met, it will not be permissible. Since people in general do not observe these two conditions, a general ruling of prohibition was given.

6. A Hadīth in chapter 11, p. 23 of *Shauq Watan* was incorrectly written because it was transcribed from a source which contained the mistake. It was incorrectly written as لم يومن resulting in the translation to be wrong as well. The correct text is لم يوص and the translation ought to be: "The person who does not make a bequest (despite having obligations for which it is obligatory on him to make a bequest) is not given permission to talk to the dead…

7. A discussion related to incantations is to be found right at the end of *Yādgār Darbār Pur Anwār*. It is not related from any pious elder. A Kānpūrī scribe wrote it with a view to provide benefit to people based on an explanation from the Madrasah there. This incantation must not be practised. Even the manner in which it is to be practised does not conform to the rules of the Sunnah.

Clarification of a text in Furū' al-Īmān

The following is stated somewhere in *Furūʿ al-Īmān*: "If you choose to become a deputy collector, barrister, etc. while adhering to the injunctions of the Sharīʿah then may it enlighten your eyes and bring joy to your heart." Apparently it seems that it is permissible to take up such occupations. It must be understood that the meaning of this statement is that if worldly progress is realized while adhering to injunctions of the Sharīʿah, a person is permitted to pursue such professions. These examples are not the objectives in themselves because whether these professions are lawful or not require a separate detailed discussion. These examples should therefore be

considered to be indulgences and not be confused with a unilateral permission [to pursue such professions].

The status of expositional sciences

Those of my writings which are related to expositional sciences – which is a branch of Tasawwuf and also referred to as facts and cognitions – and the sources of the Sharīʿah are silent about them, then based on the rules of principles and scholasticism, they must not be considered to be on the level of matters which have been proven by proofs of the Sharīʿah. In fact, it is even permissible to not believe them at all. If a person believes them, he must not raise them beyond the level of a mere possibility.

Clarification with regard to the subject matter of books in my library

My library contains all types of books including those written by other sects. These were accumulated without my direct intention. The content of these should not be considered to be authentic merely on the basis that they are in my library. Any book or subject matter which is against the rules of the Sharīʿah must be considered to be false and baseless.

Clarification with regard to items belonging to my wife

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I do not owe anyone anything at present. I hope that Allāh *taʿālā* will treat this insignificant servant in the future as He is at present and that my condition will remain protected. If I do happen to become indebted to any person and any person's item is entrusted to me, he must remind me either verbally or in writing. While on this subject, I should mention that I have paid my wife her dowry. I gave her the house in which she is living and other items as dowry. That house is totally under her ownership at present. She can do as she wills with it. Similarly, most of the goods in the house [furniture, utensils and so on] belong to her. We both know which items are co-owned by us or owned solely by myself. Allāh willing, each person's statement in this regard can be trusted.

Bequest with regard to studying Dīn

I stress on my friends specifically and to all Muslims in general that it is compulsory on each person to acquire knowledge of Dīn and to teach it to his children. This can be done through books or companionship. There is no other way of safeguarding

one’s self from Dīnī tribulations which are the order of the day. They must certainly not display any shortcomings in this regard.

Bequest to students

I advise students not to be deluded and proud by mere studying and teaching. Success in teaching and imparting knowledge is dependent on the service, companionship and affectionate gaze of the Ahlullāh. They must adhere to this very strictly. A poet says:

> Even if a person becomes an angel without the affection and attention of the special servants of Allāh *taʿālā*, his book of deeds will be black.

Bequest with regard to the administration of the Madrasah

The Madrasah which is presently under my administration here [in Thānah Bhawan] holds a certain status which needs to be explained. The details can be obtained from the article titled *Z̲ill S̲uffah* which was written by Maulwī ʿAbdullāh S̲āh̲ib. My heart desires that attention be paid to its continued existence after me. Whoever Allāh *taʿālā* inspires to serve this Madrasah must not alter its system which includes an extremely important part of character training and rectification of the self. Allāh willing, there is hope for a lot of goodness and blessings in this.

Necessary precautions

Bearing in mind the Dīnī and worldly harms, I advise special precautions with regard to the following.

1. Do not act on the demands of desires and anger.
2. Hastiness is extremely detrimental.
3. Do not do anything without consultation.
4. Give up backbiting completely.
5. Excessive talking even if on lawful matters is extremely harmful. Excessive intermingling with people without any extreme need and without any desired advantage – especially when it leads to the level of friendship, and to make matters worse, when every Tom, Dick and Harry is made into a confidant – is also extremely harmful.
6. Never eat food without having a real desire to eat.
7. Do not engage in conjugal relations without a real urge.
8. Do not incur a debt without a severe need.

9. Do not even approach wasteful spending.
10. Do not accumulate unnecessary items and goods.
11. Do not accustom yourself to sternness and severity. Let softness, self-control and forbearance be your salient qualities.
12. Abstain totally from ostentation and having airs in all matters – even in your words, actions, food and clothing.
13. A person in a position of authority must neither be rude to leaders nor intermingle too much with them. As far as possible he must not make him an objective especially to acquire worldly benefits from him.
14. Consider clarity and transparency in dealings to be more important than integrity.
15. Be particularly cautious with narrations and stories. Very senior religious and intelligent people are reckless in this regard – whether in understanding them or relating them.
16. Never consume any medication without an absolute need. And when there is a need, never consume it without permission from an expert and affectionate doctor.
17. Be very particular about restraining your tongue from every type of sin and futile talk.
18. Search for the truth, do not be dogmatic about your own view.
19. Do not increase contacts and relations.
20. Do not interfere in a person's worldly matters.

Bequest with regard to my wives

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يقول لنسائه: إن أمركن مما يهمني من بعدي، ولن يصبر عليكن إلا الصابرون الصديقون.

ʿĀ'ishah radiyallāhu ʿanhā narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam used to say to his wives: "Your wellbeing after my demise is one of the things which concerns me. Only the patient and genuinely truthful ones will be patient with you."

We learn from this Hadīth that concern for one's wife's comfort after one's death is in accordance with the Sunnah. Anyway, it is a natural feeling as well. I am making this bequest solely on the possibility that my wife will probably pass away after me – the unseen is known to Allāh *taʿālā* alone. People in general, and those of my special friends who are overcome by a bond

with me even after my demise that if twenty of them get together and take it upon themselves to give one rupee each every month to my wife, then hopefully she will not experience any hardship. However, my fundamental reliance and trust is in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Bearing in mind that I entered into a second marriage towards the end of Ramadān 1334 A.H., I make the same bequest to my friends with regard to her. When I am no longer here or – Allāh forbid – I become incapable of seeing to them, they must make arrangements for another twenty rupees for my second wife or add ten rupees to the previous amount and give fifteen rupees to each one.

Request for conveying rewards

I request all my associates to remember me for the rest of their lives and to read Sūrah Yā Sīn or three times Sūrah Ikhlās daily, and send the rewards to me. However, they must not do anything else which is against the Sunnah or any bidʿah which is committed by the masses and elite.

Do not attach the heart to the world

As far as possible, do not attach your heart to the world and whatever is in it. Never be negligent of the Hereafter. Always remain in a condition whereby if death comes to you at any time, you do not have any concern or desire.

لَوْ لَآ اَخَّرْتَنِيْٓ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ فَاَصَّدَّقَ وَاَكُنْ مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ

If only You would give me respite for a short while so that I may give in charity and become of the righteous.[1]

Constantly seek forgiveness for sins of the day before the approach of the night, and sins of the night before the approach of the day. As far as possible, try to free yourself from all rights which you owe to fellow humans.

Concern for a good death

Believe that a good death is the most superior and most perfect of all bounties and favours. Make special duʿā’ for this with absolute supplication and beseeching after the five salāhs. Be forever thankful for īmān as per the promise:

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[1] Sūrah al-Munāfiqūn, 63: 10.

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَاَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ

If you are thankful, I will give you more.

This is also from among the great causes of a good death. I conclude this article with the same request for myself: Allāh *taʿālā* must enable me to leave this world with īmān.

Hadrat Wālā's lineage

Short details with regard to Hadrat Wālā's lineage were provided at the beginning of this book, *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. The matter of one's lineage demands special precautions according to the Sharīʿah. This is why Hadrat Wālā continued investigations in this regard in almost every part of his life. Due to the changing nature of the investigations, several different articles were written on this subject. These are mentioned in *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* and its addendums. Some of them have also been abrogated. The last of these articles was published in the periodical *an-Nūr* dated Ramadān and Shawwāl 1343 A.H. It is titled *Khātimah at-Tahqīqāt*. All these scattered portions were then collated and arranged in *Mawā'id al-ʿAwā'id* and then published in *an-Nūr*, Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1347 A.H. under the heading *Mawā'id al-ʿAwā'id*. I consider it sufficient to quote Hadrat Wālā's statement in this regard. He then added footnotes to some of the sections. These will be quoted after the original document.[1]

Addendums To Bequests

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This is a copy of my partial bequest which is a sample of my daily transactions and dealings related to my bequest. It is being published with the sole purpose of presenting a sample so that the order of writing a bequest as mentioned in a Hadīth (which was quoted at the beginning of the last section) is practised on.[2] Those who

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[1] This document has not been translated.

[2] If a person does not know how to write, he must have it written by someone or convey it verbally to a reliable and intelligent person. A person who does not know the rules and regulations in this regard must continue recording the events of his life and then make a bequest for everything to be worked out through the fatwās of the ʿulamā'.

record it may learn how to do it – with changes based on their situation. Since our daily dealings generally change all the time, it is necessary to keep blank spaces after each of the original headings so that when changes take place, they can be recorded easily.

The same form should be adopted throughout the bequest and the daily changes recorded. If the blank space gets filled up before one can complete writing the additions, the remaining portion must be written at the end of the document as part of the original text, but numbered as an endnote. Since there might be other endnotes as well, let there be continuity in the numbering. Alternatively, the additional notes may be noted on a separate page and attached to the main document. If any separate number needs to be added, it can be done at the end. Continue in this way on a regular basis until the journey to the Hereafter is before you. If any person feels the need to improve on this sample in any way, he can inform me without any hesitations. Allāh *taʿālā* alone inspires to righteous deeds and He alone is the true rectifier in this world and the Hereafter. Written by Ashraf ʿAlī – may Allāh pardon him.

A copy of the partial bequest

1. The new house and cemetery are waqf

My new house and the new cemetery are both registered as endowments. Their endowment names are mentioned in point number eight.

2. The present items in the lounge area and rooms

My sitting place in the Khānqāh which is in the lounge area and the two rooms which are attached to it – i.e. room one and room two – contain many items such as books, boxes, papers, utensils, medicine, cloths, mats, curtains. All these belong to me except for the items which are recorded on a board which is placed on a shelf in the cupboard in room number one. The fans which are occasionally brought here from the masjid also do not belong to me. The letter box which is outside the lounge area, the printed and hand-written posters which are pasted outside belong to me. Similarly, a locked cupboard outside the lounge area and whatever it contains, and all the letters and documents which are in the locked cabinet-window belong to me as well.

3. Clarification of items in my house

I have certain items which belong to me in both the houses, e.g. cloths, mats, a bed, a few small utensils and a few flower pots. The trees in the house do not belong to me. The cotton curtains, chairs, some beds, bedsteads, stools, stands for water pots, legs which are placed under the bedsteads, and a few other miscellaneous items which are not intrinsic parts of the endowment house or similar to them (because items such as hooks, door shutters, bamboo which is attached to walls, etc.) are included in the endowment. However, the floor fans with their cords are not in the endowment. Items which are temporarily connected to the endowment, there is doubt or differences of opinion about those which are temporary or permanent, and the endower's intention could not be ascertained, then the view of knowledgeable people must be followed. Details and identification of these items must be obtained from both houses. If there is any difference with the endower or inheritor, the ruling of the Sharīʿah must be practised upon. Some of the items which I listed as my own possessions are not the sum total of my possessions. They have been merely listed as examples to draw attention to items which are normally overlooked or doubted.

4. Bequest with regard to my estate

After paying for my burial arrangements and paying off my debts which are detailed in point number seven, one quarter of my remaining estate must be used as follows: (1) All items which are given to me as trusts (detailed in points 4 & 5). The owners must be informed of them, conveyed to them and the cost of conveying to them must be paid from this quarter. (2) From the same one quarter, the estate is to be distributed in the order which follows.

1. Books which do not have "waqf" written on them. These books must be given to Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm. If a bequest for my books is found in favour of any other Madrasah, I retract from it. Books which have "waqf" written on them will remain the property of the Madrasah whose name is to be found on the book.

2. The tent cloth which is used as a curtain in the lounge area, the straw mats which are laid beneath the chequered linen cloth, the straw mats which are laid on the floor of the attached

lounge area, and also the straw mats in rooms number one and two. All these items must be left in their places as endowments.

3. The tent-cloth prayer mats which are laid in the canopied area outside the lounge must be laid in the mihrāb of the masjid (this includes the rolled up straw mats, those which are laid beneath the chequered cloths and the chequered clothes themselves).

4. Copies of *al-'Udhr wa an-Nadhr* must be conveyed to whichever places it is easy, especially to those who are our opponents.

5. A few addendums to the *Tanbīhāt* must be given to those who are interested in them.

6. Urdu and Arabic lineages and chains of transmission must be given to those who ask for them. A poster must be made informing of the availability of these lineages and chains and displayed in a prominent place.

7. Used paper, most of which is in a box in the eastern room of the lounge must be given to any non-heir who wants it. If any heir wants it, he must pay for it. This money will then be included in the one quarter.

8. Items which normally remain after shrouding and burial arrangements e.g. utensils for bathing the deceased (if these have been purchased for this purpose), the sheet which is placed on the bed, any left over strips of timber must be given exactly as they are or the monies which are obtained from their sale to masājid and poor people.

9. Miswāks which are stored on a shelf in the western room. These can be distributed to whoever wants.

10. The remaining bricks and small buckets of the cemetery.

11. The tools which were used for the construction of the cemetery or new house, e.g. shovel, soil-strainer, spade, etc…everything from the bricks to the wooden posts must first be used for the cemetery – either exactly as they are or the monies obtained from their sale for the upkeep of the cemetery, seeing to its trees, payment of the worker and purchasing of other necessities. If the cemetery does not need any of these items, everything except for the buckets – which must remain at the cemetery well – must be given to Madrasah Imdād al-

ʿUlūm. The bricks will be used as they are if there is a need for further construction. If not, their value. Everything else for as long as they remain as they are must be used exactly as they are for the cemetery, Madrasah, and every other place which is an endowment. They must be used when these places have a need for such items. The construction items do not include tar-coal, cement, etc. These are included in the normal estate.

If quarter of the estate cannot accommodate all the above items, preference will always be given to the returning of trusts. The remainder will be distributed proportionately.

If, after spending on all the above, there still remains anything from the one quarter, it will be distributed as follows:

Upkeep of the cemetery, maintenance of its trees, payment of the worker for as long as needed. If the need ends or there is no need, the remainder will be distributed in two and given to my two wives who can spend it in good causes according to their wishes.

All the above was with regard to the one quarter. The remaining three quarters will be distributed among my Sharʿī heirs. Included in this are the keys – apart from those which are in key-rings which are used all the time for the locks and are already included in the estate – which are in a pouch in my desk. Some of these keys are dual sided and can be used in any direction. Others are useless. These can be included among the other items. However, there is one key which is the Madrasah key which is known to such and such person.

5. Bequest with regard to trusts

Each of the pouches or envelopes which contain the trusts have the name, address and some reminders written on them. The people whose names are recorded there must be sent registered letters together with the reminders, informing them of the trusts which are here. The cost of the postage was mentioned in point number four. If any of these people have passed on, their heirs must be informed in the same manner. If an heir is still a minor, the order concerning such an heir will be explained in point number six. If you do not receive a response from those to whom you sent the registered letters, consult the ʿulamāʾ for a ruling of the Sharīʿah in this regard and act on it. Expenses for making inquiries about the heirs will also be borne as explained in point number four. If any

pouch or envelope has nothing written on it or the word "personal" is written on it, then it belongs to me and will be included in my estate. You might find a pouch on which the words "shared account" are written. This is the amount which I used to distribute to each of my houses [wives] at the end of each month. However, the amount belongs to me before the distribution. It will therefore not be distributed. However, one quarter of it will be removed and included in the quarter which was described in point number four. If a pouch has the name of any of my wives on it and there is any money in it, it will be given to her as she is its owner in the hope that the other wife has already been given her share of such an amount. It will not be taken from this amount so as to give both an equal share because the obligation of equality ends when a person dies. Any way, based on the intention, there will be no accounting for an absence of equality. However, if it is established through a proof of the Sharī'ah that one wife can be given [to the exclusion of the other] when a person is on his death bed, then this amount will be taken back.

Note: The pouches and envelopes in which the trusts are kept belong to me.

6. Books which were sponsored by others

(1) The amount of .....[1]from ..... a resident of ..... was given for the sake of conveying rewards to his own father, Maulwī.... (2) The amount of ...from ...the daughter of ...a resident of ....The books to the value of both amounts for the book titled....printed by ....book dealers of ....must be obtained from the printer. Both sponsors must be informed by registered post[2] as per the above addresses that a certain number of books have been printed from the monies which they gave. What must be done with the books? If any of them have passed on, ask their heirs. However, the share of minors must be conveyed to them in any situation. If no reply is received, the books must be given to Madrasah Imdād al-'Ulūm or its Majlis Khayr or sold. The monies received must be used for their expenses. If any verified information is received about what to

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[1] These places have been left blank. The full names and other details of the sponsors are clearly mentioned in the original document. They have been left out here in consideration to the sponsors.

[2] These books have arrived and I have informed the people concerned.

do with the amounts, then from the present funds one must practise on the details which are mentioned about informing heirs. Guarantees for only the pure amounts must be made from the Majlis. Minor heirs must certainly be given their shares, while majors who ask for it will be given. The amounts which have already been spend have been discussed under point number four.

7. Clarification with regard to loans and debts

Details with regard to debts which I owe or I am owed are to be found in a pouch in my desk. Sometimes they are also placed in the cupboard of my room. To make certain, one may also search for them in my black leather-bound notebook. Some points written in red will also be found in this notebook. These have nothing to do with the bequest. However, one point in red will be seen which concerns the account for the kitchen. It contains details of the monies given to my houses [wives] for the food. They must be asked if there is any remainder or if I owe anything. It will be included in my debts.

8. Documents concerning the endowment and other related issues

The locked window which is in the lounge area contains a tin in one corner which has documents related to endowment and other related issues. These must be given to the trustee of the endowment. His name can be learnt from the endowment document. The tin which holds the documents is included in the endowment.

9. Post which arrives after my demise

All letters, envelopes, postcards – whether with self-replied envelopes or not – which arrive in my name must be returned to the senders. Similarly, money orders must not be accepted; they must be returned after writing about my situation on them. However, if any money order coupon appears to be for the Madrasah, and the postman promises that he will only hand it over to us after seeing the sender’s letter, it must be kept as a trust by the post office for as long as the law allows. In the meantime, a letter must be sent to the sender asking for details. The cost of this letter will be borne from my one quarter as detailed in point number four. The letter must then be shown to the postal authorities and the money order may be retrieved. However, if collecting the money order in this way is

against the rules of the post office, it must be returned at the very beginning.

10. The method of conveying rewards

No one must ever assemble to convey rewards to me – neither formally nor informally. If people happen to assemble for some other reason, and then decide to recite Qur'ān for the sake of conveying rewards to me, they must make it a point to disband and each person may individually convey rewards through du'ā', charity or optional worship – depending on what his heart desires. Items which were used by myself during my lifetime must not be used as items for obtaining blessings. However, if a person has become a Shar'ī owner of any of my belongings, and stores it with him secretly, there is no objection to it. He must neither announce what he has nor show it to others.

Precautionary note

The noting of my bequest – like other notes – is merely to aid one's memory and to make the investigations easy. This is inferred from the following words of Allāh *ta'ālā*:

ذٰلِكُمْ اَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللهِ وَاَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَاَدْنٰى اَنْ لَّا تَرْتَابُوْا

In this there is full justice according to Allāh and the best way of maintaining the evidence, and likelier that you will not fall in doubt.[1]

Therefore, if there is any conflict between the testator and heirs, or among the heirs themselves, or it affects the right of a minor, then the mere record is not a Shar'ī proof. Rather, there will be a need for proof or acceptance from the claimant provided he is a major. Or, witnesses to my verbal statement or approval to my written word must be produced. However, if my statement or approval was made while I was on my deathbed, the rules of approval of a patient will apply. These can be learnt from an erudite scholar. This is a general note of caution. Details can be obtained from the fatwās of the 'ulamā' when the matter is presented to them. The bequest document ends here.

[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 282.

The Subject Matter of The Paste Board as Mentioned in Point Two

(If there is any contradiction between this subject and the hand-written paste board, consideration will be given to the hand-written one)

Reminders with regard to the trusts which are stored in Room Number One:

1. All unbound copies of *Rāfīʿ ad-Dank* are for distribution. They belong to Shaykh (….) Sāhib.
2. All unbound copies of *Hadyah Sunnīyyah, Taqlīl al-Ikhtilāt al-Anām* and *Asrār al-ʿIbādah* are for distribution and belong to Hājī (…..) Sāhib. These must be treated like all other trusts as explained in point number five. If copies of these books are found in Room Number Two, they belong to me. Similarly, the clothes which are hanging on the line in this room are for the poor. I bequest their distribution.
3. The long teapoy belongs to Maulwī (….). It must be returned to him.
4. The hourly clock in the lounge area belongs to the Madrasah.
5. The square poster with the Ramadān time table which is on a stand in the lounge area does not belong to me.
6. At the bottom of the letter box which is placed in front of my bench and on the large shelf on the southern wall of the lounge area contain many documents which belong to others. The printed ones have the names of the owners and these must be returned to them. Blank un-numbered envelopes or un-numbered reply cards must be given to the scribes with information of what is to be written on them. The numbered envelopes and cards are with regard to fatwās. The answers which correspond with the numbers on the envelopes and cards must be given to the scribe or the copier who will then note the fatwā and post these answers. If the corresponding numbers cannot be found, the questioner must be informed of this. Documents on which the word "found item" is written must be disposed of according to the rules related to found items. Envelopes which have

stamps but no address should also be treated as found items.

Matters Related to Contents of Pouches And Letters Mentioned in Points Five And Seven

1. This amount is for H̲ājī (…) S̲āh̲ib for the task of proof reading the *Mawāʿiz̲*. He must be informed and act on his approval. However, the work of the *Mawāʿiz̲* must be stopped immediately and he must be informed of this as well. The amount which is due to him until the work was stopped must be calculated and he must be paid for it.
   Note: The pouch which contains the above amount also has an envelope which serves as a reminder that this amount is part of the above amount which is (….) rupees. I kept it separately because I had taken this amount as a loan from him after obtaining his tacit permission. I then replaced it quickly but did not absolve myself from it. Therefore, if this amount is lost before it reaches him or before his permission is obtained, it will be paid from my estate. If my estate has already been distributed among my heirs, the amount must be taken back proportionate to each one's share and given to him because payment of debts takes precedence over inheritance.
2. This amount belongs to (…) Khān S̲āh̲ib for the lighting of the Madrasah courtyard, bathroom, etc. He or his heirs must be informed of this amount and then do as he or they permit.
3. This amount belongs to (…) masjid which was given to me by (…) S̲āh̲ib. It must be returned to him.
4. The address of the person to whom this money belongs is: A.D. Motala, Post Box 544, Durban, Natal, South Africa. He neither informed me as to where this amount must be spent nor did he reply to my letter. Ask him again. If a reply is not received at the end of two months, the amount must be used for the printing of any volume of *Iʿlā' as-Sunan* or any other book which needs this money.
5. This amount belonging to (….) Khān S̲āh̲ib is a zakāt amount. Inform him that it was Ashraf ʿAlī's view to divide them in two and give them to his both wives together with the poor. It now depends on what the Khān S̲āh̲ib wants to do with it.

6. The subject matter of this is similar to that of number five. However, it contains one portion which is optional charity. My view with regard to this optional charity is for it to be distributed in cash to the students and seekers.
7. The pouch contains an amount for fidyah for missed salāhs given to me by Hājī (…) Khān Sāhib in favour of (…) Khān. Seek his permission once again to distribute it among the poor of Thānah Bhawan.
8. This amount belongs to (…) Sāhib. He gave me a tacit permission to give it to Maulwī (…) Sāhib as a loan. The amount must be collected from the Maulwī Sāhib and spent as (…) Sāhib instructs. If the amount is not collected, it must be given to the owner from my estate. Once it is collected later on, it must be re-included in my estate. If (….) Sāhib pardons me, his pardon must be accepted, and the amount will be included in my estate once it is collected.

Note: Those who entrusted monies to me must be informed to establish the exact or approximate number of days the money was with me and obtain a fatwā as to whether zakāh is obligatory on it or not.

The amount that was spent in respect of trusts which were obligatory to return was not noted because the owners obviously intended for the amount to be used up in total. The leasing is valid by inference. However, if the 'ulamā' issue a fatwā to the contrary, the matter must be closed, post cards must be purchased from my one quarter as detailed under point number four, and all must be informed about it. If there is a need for fees for the money order, it must be taken from the same money. The complete addresses of all these people are recorded by Hāfiz (….). Moneys which are not known to me are not included in this. Similarly, this does not cover any changes made by the owners of the amounts. That is all.

A sample of a record of debts

1. Hāfiz (…) annas for binding two books. If the binding is not completed before my demise, the transaction is cancelled. He must return the books.
2. An amount for the *Mawā'iz* as mentioned in point number one in the previous section on amounts which are in the pouches and envelopes.

3. Monthly salaries of workers and attendants up to this time as per the following table:

Zayd	ʿUmar	Bakr	Khālid
Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount

Half-year

Washer-man	Barber
Amount	Amount

The half year commences from the third and tenth solar months of the Hindus. The portion of the ration for both homes was probably noted in point number seven of the bequest.

Note: I have given in full the dowry to both my wives.

Collectable amounts

1. From the father of (…).
2. From my wife, the amount of (…).
3. The amount of (…) which was mentioned in point number eight in the previous section.
4. From Maulwī, the amount of (…).
5. From my wives for the food account which was mentioned in point seven of the bequest.

Note: If there is any vagueness, shortcoming, confusion, error in any part of my bequest – from beginning to end – and this has caused doubts and confusion, the injunctions of the Sharīʿah must be ascertained and practised upon. In fact, every non-ʿālim person who reads this bequest must read it with understanding under an ʿālim. This will help him to write his own bequest and will correctly, and enable him to proceed with it in the proper manner. Was salām.

Note to the above bequest: I appoint Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī as the testator of this bequest. I give him two pieces of advice: (1) He must include a pious intelligent ʿālim in carrying out this bequest. (2) He must obtain the *Tanbīhāt Waṣīyyat* from the Madrasah or from anywhere else, obtain its addendums from my desk and read all these documents once again. Those of the bequests which have to be acted on immediately must be acted on, or a special or general announcement must be made. If

there is any contradiction between any parts, the latest one must be practised on. This will be ascertained by the date. Written by Ashraf ʿAlī, 1st Muharram al-Harām 1346 A.H.

Detailed footnotes to al-Istihdār

The concise footnotes which are provided at the end of *al-Istihdār* in respect of certain bequests are detailed here in order to make it easy for the reader.

1. The present books at Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm

The books which were in Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm Thānah Bhawan since before my arrival must be noted on a separate list and stored separately. Those whose arrival is known to me have a separate list. The persons who donated these books have given me full rights to copy and transcribe them, or do whatever else I like. I have therefore decided that if – Allāh forbid – no benefit is derived from them, they must be transferred to Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

2. Arrangements for both wives

Details in this regard were provided in this chapter.

3. Editing of Mawāʿiz manuscripts

I bequest Maulwī Zafar Ahmad to review and edit those of my *Mawāʿiz* which have not been edited and corrected by myself. He must carry out this task on behalf of the Majlis after obtaining the assistance of Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī, Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan, Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā or anyone else whom he considers to be worthy for this task.

4. A caution about my khulafā'

From among those to whom I gave permission to accept bayʿah and continue the work of education and rectification [i.e. those who were appointed as khulafā'], there are a few (although a very small number) who rarely correspond with me or contact me. This is insufficient for me to know their present conditions. It is not far fetched to assume that the condition which existed at the time when they were appointed could have changed. After all:

فإن الحي لا تؤمن عليه الفتنة

A living person is always prone to tribulation.

In fact, it is not impossible to retrogress to such a level even after being firmly embedded in it. Although a rare occurrence is considered to be non-existent because genuine steadfastness in which a change is generally impossible cannot be known with certainty by anyone. On the other hand, a supposition already demonstrates such a possibility. As a precaution, I therefore make this general announcement with respect to all my khulafā' – especially those who do not correspond with me – that people must not revert to them solely by relying on the permission which I gave to them. Rather, they must look for the signs of an erudite master as described by myself in *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn,* see if they apply to the person and then act on that. I do not want to bear this burden.

5. Completing my manuscripts

1. Any article attributed to me but not corrected by myself – indications of these corrections will be found throughout the article – must not be transcribed and attributed to me because of the possibility of error.

2. Incomplete articles and books may be completed – provided this is possible – by Maulwī H̱abīb Aẖmad S̱āẖib, Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī S̱āẖib, Maulwī Ẕafar Aẖmad S̱āẖib and Maulwī H̱akīm Muẖammad Mus̱tafā S̱āẖib – and only the editing of the *Mawāʿiẕ* may be done by Khwājah ʿAzīz al-H̱asan S̱āẖib – or anyone whom these persons choose. If it is found difficult to explain the concise manuscripts, they may be edited in the form of *Malfūẕāt.*

3. In the above case, the article or book must be attributed to the person who completed it. This person has full right to make whatever corrections he deems fit.

Note: I stated previously that indications of my corrections will be found throughout the article or book. These can be identified by those who know my handwriting. No article must be attributed to me without this. It has also been my practice for a long time to end an article with the words: "12 *minhu*".

6. Review and re-editing of my books

In the fifth addendum to the *Tanbīhāt* I wrote the name of a book titled *Tas̱-ẖīẖ al-Aghlāṯ* and stated that it is currently in the process of being written. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā,* I have completed it. The reality behind this book is that I never have

certainty about my understanding or acumen. At the same time, I am not so averse to it that I would pay attention to searching for my own mistakes and errors. However, if anyone points out a mistake to me, I revert from it immediately and make a point of publishing it. This point is clear from my written works especially with regard to *Imdād al-Fatāwā* where I have a long list at the end of some volumes. This was done up to a certain time.

Then when the *Tanbīhāt* became quite considerable, I felt it prudent to commence a separate series in this regard. This is the background to *Tarjīh̲ ar-Rājih̲* whose fourth volume is being compiled this year. This is the second era.

Then the thought came to me that what if we will not find someone or the other to point out every single error. In such a case, many errors will be overlooked from correction. I therefore decided to select a handful of 'ulamā' who are religious, reliable – in knowledge and practice – who will neither make concessions to me nor be overly stubborn, and to give them all the written works for reviewing and editing. They may correct all mistakes with full freedom and investigation. Subsequently, this task is being carried out very excellently. This is the reality behind this book [*Tas̲-h̲īh̲ al-Aghlāt̲*]. This is the third era.

My bequest is that if this task is not completed in my life, it must continue after me. I make du'ā' that Allāh *ta'ālā* makes its completion and publication easy.

آمين بحرمة سيد المرسلين صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين

7. Abstain from evil thoughts about the permissions

Prelude by the author of *Ashraf as-Sawānih̲*: The clarification and warning is explained here: I just cannot know the conditions of some of my khulafā'. I drew attention to it in the seventh addendum. Furthermore, I have heard that the conditions of some are doubtful. As a precaution, I propose a separate list of all khulafā'. At present, anyone who is not in this list must not be considered to be a khalīfah. However, if any person's condition proves to be satisfactory, his name will be re-entered.

Note: When I say the others must not be considered to be khulafā', I am not denying their capabilities. My knowledge

denies their capabilities. In other words, I am not certain whether they are worthy of khilāfah.

8. & 9. Kalām al-Mulūk and Ihyā' as-Sunan are included in the syllabus

1. *Niʿmat ʿUẕmā* the translation of *Ṯabaqāt Kubrā* has been added to the syllabus of the Khānqāh.[1]

2. *Kalām al-Mulūk* which I had been waiting for a long time and *Iʿlā' as-Sunan* (previously titled *Iẖyā' as-Sunan*) have been added in the Madrasah syllabus after they were printed.

10. The syllabus for sulūk

The complete syllabus of the Khānqāh is as follows in the sequence that it is noted. This has been compiled after a few changes.

1. *Ādāb al-Muʿāsharah*.
2. *Maʿmūlāt-e-Khānqāh*.
3. *Raẖmatul Mutaʿallimīn* part one.
4. *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* parts one and two (beliefs, actions and acts of worship).
5. *Takashshuf* part one.
6. *Furuʿ al-Īmān.*
7. *Nuzhatul Basātīn*.
8. *Rāẖat al-Qulūb.*
9. *Tablīgh-e-Dīn.*
10. *Jihād-e-Akbar.*
11. *Qaṣd as-Sabīl.*
12. Remaining sections of *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn.*
13. *Takashshuf* parts two and three.
14. *Masā'il as-Sulūk.*
15. *Mathnawī* sixth register.
16. *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* complete.
17. *ʿAwārif.*
18. *ad-Durr al-Manḏūd.*
19. *Tarjumah Ādāb al-ʿUbūdīyyah.*
20. *Tarjumah Tanbīh al-Mughtarrīn.*
21. *Ikmāl ash-Shiyam.*
22. *Niʿmat ʿUẕmā.*
23. *Rafʿuḏ-Ḏīq.*
24. *Uṣūl al-Wuṣūl.*

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[1] The full syllabus is provided in point number ten.

25. *al-Ibtilā' li Ahl al-Istifā'*.

Note: Changes in the sequence are possible based on the view of one's shaykh.

11. Awjaz as-Siyar is included in the syllabus

The book *Awjaz as-Siyar* written by Maulwī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī is now included in the elementary syllabus of children in this Khānqāh. I recommend others to do the same.

12. Correction of written works

As a precaution, I advise for all my written works to be evaluated by other erudite ʿulamā' and their counsel be acted on. However, I draw the attention to specific works at this point:

1. *Anwār al-Wujūd* must not be read by the laymen. Even scholars must only read it to the level of anecdotes.
2. The periodical, *an-Nūr*, vol. 3 no. 9 contains a word of caution about *Nayl ash-Shifā'*. Do not act against it.
3. It is compulsory to act on the cautionary note with regard to *Fayslah Haft Mas'alah* as contained in the tenth note of *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat*.
4. *Bahishtī Zewar, Bahishtī Gauhar* and *Imdād al-Fatāwā* together with their addendums must certainly be studied with *Tarjīh ar-Rājih* because many corrections have been made to them. Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī included these essential corrections when printing the *Mukammal wa Mudallal Bahishtī Zewar*.
5. Several points have been overlooked in *Jamāl al-Qur'ān*. Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī will be republishing it after making necessary corrections.
6. Some scholars have differed with certain texts of *Nush al-Ikhwān* due to their vagueness or conciseness. Each lesson must be read before a scholar and – where there is any conflict – the correct point must be followed.
7. My last explanation in *Masā'il Ahl al-Khullah* should not be considered to be the absolute view. Rather, an independent investigation must be made.

Finally, I beg my beloveds to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* clears my intentional and unintentional mistakes, and not to make my speeches and writings a cause of misguidance.

13. Livelihood for 'ulamā'

(This is the gist of the book *Atyab al-Akāsib li at-Tullāb* written by Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib under my encouragement. My encouragement is the reason for making this book part of my own writing). Those who only look at the outward elements of life assume that the 'ulamā' are serving Dīn for their own livelihoods. It was therefore my thought for some time that 'ulamā' should also learn some lawful crafts and trades. If they cannot serve Dīn while placing their trust in Allāh *ta'ālā*, they can at least earn a living through these crafts and trades and maintain the dignity of Dīn. *Atyab al-Akāsib* has been written on this subject. It contains two parts, one is on the above subject, while the second part provides – by way of example - a list of ways to earn together with names and identities of experts in the various fields who have promised – either explicitly or implicitly – to teach these crafts and trades. These are listed below:

1. Teaching in Madāris Islāmīyyah.
2. Farming – Hājī 'Azīz al-Rahmān Sāhib, Aychaulī, district Meerut.
3. Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib, Meerut, Karam 'Alī Mahallā.
4. Bagging and leather-tanning – the manager of the Tannery and Maulwī 'Abd al-Hakīm Sāhib.
5. Watch repairs – Hāfiz 'Abd ar-Razzāq Sāhib, Nasīr Watch Company, Meerut, Sadr Bazaar.
6. Printing – Munshī Mahbūb 'Alī Sāhib, Nāmī Printers, Meerut.
7. Bookshop – Muhammad 'Uthmān Khān Sāhib, a book trader in Delhi.
8. Soap-making – Mīr Ma'sūm 'Alī Sāhib, Nārwe Soap Company, Meerut.
9. Iron-mongering.
10. Carpentry – Muhammad Siddīq, Kirānah, district Muzaffar Nagar.
11. Betel-leaf making.
12. Tailoring – Sulaymān, Muzaffar Nagar.
13. Bookbinding.
14. Tinsmith.
15. Employment at government high schools after writing an examination – Maulwī Fādil and others.

14. A cash amount

Maulwī Habīb Ahmad Sāhib Kīrānwī had an account with me which has been paid in full. The amount is therefore not noted here. An explicit statement as regards its full payment has been published by Hadrat Wālā. The Maulwī Sāhib does not have anything now.

15. Khayr al-Usūl is included in the syllabus

The book, *Khayr al-Usūl fī Hadīth ar-Rasūl* – on the subject of definitions and principles of Hadīth – written by Maulānā Khayr Muhammad Sāhib has been included in our syllabus for those who are commencing Hadīth studies.

Al-'Udhr wa an-Nadhr

Request

Read this yourself and – as far as possible – show it to others and obtain rewards for your efforts. Do it while I am alive and also after my demise. Pay particular attention to the couplets at the end.

The reason behind writing this article

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The impetus behind writing this article is that I am approximately between 60 and 70 years old, which, according to the Hadīth would be the maximum age of the majority of the followers of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Compared to other times, this particular period needs a lot of preparation for the Hereafter. After īmān, the preparation entails setting right ones actions. And the most important of these actions is absolute clarity as regards the rights of fellow humans. There are only two ways to clarify and resolve such rights, viz. fulfilling the rights and seeking pardon. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I never intentionally committed any shortcoming in fulfilling a right. However, I have certainly been found wanting in seeking pardon from those who have rights over me. This tribulation is found almost everywhere. However, this in no way can give us any concession from the Sharīʿah. It therefore becomes obligatory to fulfil this obligation with due importance.

There are two ways of doing this: (1) To address each of those who have claims over me either by writing to them or speaking

directly to them, and presenting my position to them. (2) To apologize and request pardon via a general address.

The first option is difficult because of a few reasons: (1) I do not remember all those who have claims over me. (2) It is not possible to meet them all or their whereabouts are not known. (3) I cannot be conscious of the claims at the time of meeting every person. (4) I am unable to undertake any journey because of certain impediments. (5) I do not have the courage to carry this out with so much of importance.

This is why I chose the second and easier option and am publishing the following article. It is a general address to all those whose rights I intentionally or unintentionally trampled. This address will contain a few sections in sequence.

Ahādīth with regard to rights

Since I have been commanded by the Sharīʿah to make such an address and my addressees too are instructed to pay heed to it, I am quoting the translation of a few Ahādīth which are related to this subject. I will then present my address in sequence.

1. Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "If a person has a due to another person as regards the latter's honour or anything else, he must obtain his pardon today before there comes a time when he will have neither dīnār nor dirham. If the defaulter has good deeds, they will be taken from him proportionate to his wrong and given over to the oppressed person. If he does not have sufficient good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded onto him."[1]

2. Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "There was a person who used to give items to people on credit. He used to say to his worker: 'When you go to any poor person [to collect the dues], you must pardon him, perhaps Allāh *taʿālā* will pardon us [for our dues].' When he passed away and presented himself before Allāh *taʿālā*, He pardoned him."[2]

3. Hadrat Jaudān narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "If a person apologizes to his Muslim

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[1] Bukhārī. Mishkāt, Bāb az-Zulm.
[2] Bukhārī and Muslim. Mishkāt, Bāb al-Iflās.

brother and the latter does not accept his apology, he will be committing a sin like the one who obtains ill-gotten wealth.”[1] Another narration states that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: “The person who does not accept the apology of his brother will not be able to come near me at the Fountain of Abundance.”[2]

4. Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: “Among the ways of atoning for backbiting is for you to seek forgiveness for the one against whom you had committed backbiting. You must say: ‘O Allāh! Forgive me and him.’”[3]

5. Hadrat Abū Ayyūb Ansārī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: “It is not lawful for a person to sever ties from his brother for more than three days in the sense that they meet each other, yet one turns his face away from him and the other does the same. The better of the two is the one who offers salām first.”[4]

My address in sequence:

1. A request for pardon or for collection of one’s dues

In the light of Hadīth number one, I, Ashraf – who is most insignificant and worthless – announce to all those who have a claim over me – whether a monetary claim (the possibility of which is weak and small except for the self-stamped letters which come to me and the writer’s full address is not provided. After waiting for some time, I use those stamps as “found items” but the intention is that if the owner does not approve of my spending it in this way, he must present himself to me. Or any other due which I cannot recall. Such a person must also present himself and make his claim. In all conditions, I will pay provided I am convinced of the claimant’s truthfulness) or a non-monetary claim, e.g. I said something to someone without justification – whether directly or in his absence – initiated

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[1] Narrated by Abū Dāwūd in his *Marāsīl*, and by Ibn Mājah through two sound transmissions.
[2] Targhīb wa Tarhīb.
[3] Narrated by Bayhaqī in *Daʿwat Kabīr*. He said that there is some weakness in this transmission (which is not harmful in such chapters). Mishkāt.
[4] Bukhārī and Muslim. Mishkāt, Bāb Mā Yunhā ʿAnhu min at-Tahājur.

such a talk, transgressed the limit of equality in exacting revenge or caused undue physical harm to someone (there is a strong possibility of such non-monetary claims). I very humbly beg all such people to take a recompense for these claims from me – provided I am convinced of the person's truthfulness – or to pardon me with the intention of being rewarded by Allāh *taʿālā*. I will be grateful to them in both situations for having freed me from accounting in the Hereafter. In the case where they pardon me, I will pray for them because they have shown additional kindness to me.

2. Pardon for non-monetary claims

In the light of Hadīth number two and in the hope of obtaining Allāh's pardon, I pardon everyone – without exception – for any non-monetary claim which I have over them (I had made a similar announcement previously). As for monetary claims, I permit the one who is unable to pay me back to come and speak to me directly – Allāh willing – I will look for an easy solution. The pardon could take the form of a concession, respite or something else.

3. An address to those who do not pardon me

In the light of Hadīth number three – those who do not accept my apology although I am begging to them – I advise them that it is extremely dangerous to take upon themselves the warning for not pardoning. It is no ordinary thing to commit the sin of obtaining ill-gotten wealth and depriving oneself at the Fountain of Abundance. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us all from such a warning being applied to us. Anyway, you have many other dues to your fellow humans and to your Creator. What will your position be if they do not pardon you? Whereas if you forgo your own rights, you have hope for pardon as stated in Hadīth number two.

4. Seeking forgiveness for unknown dues

There may be some people who have not forgiven me for the claims which they have over me and must have made themselves eligible for the warning issued in Hadīth number three. However, in the light of Hadīth number four, I will continue seeking forgiveness for them whenever I seek forgiveness for myself. After all, there is nothing else which I can do. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept it, make this action an

atonement for me, and accept this forgiveness for those who have claims over me.

5. Establishing a rule for one's oppressor and one who was oppressed

In the light of Hadīth number five I state for myself, those who wronged me and those whom I wronged that pardoning a person for his wrong and accepting his apology does not necessarily mean that I have to maintain special friendship with him. Sometimes it is not possible to do this and sometimes – after my experience – it is not advantageous. However, if we meet by coincidence, we must certainly offer salām. If one initiates a conversation, the other must reply appropriately, even if it is a short reply. If the conversation becomes more than necessary which could lead to informality, the other must excuse himself kindly. The *Lamaʿāt* quotes a footnote of Imām Suyūṯī *rahimahullāh* to this Hadīth of *al-Muwattā'* as follows:

ومن خاف من مكالمة أحد وصلته ما يفسد عليه دينه ويدخل مضرة في دنياه يجوز له مجانبته والبعد عنه، ورب هجر جميل خير من مخالطة موذية.

If a person fears damage to his Dīn – including worldly harm – by conversing with a person or maintaining contact with him, it is permissible for him to stay away from him and keep aloof from him. A friendly separation may prove to be better than a harmful interaction.

The above Hadīth excludes severing ties with a person on account of Dīnī reasons. This is explicitly stated in the same footnote:

من قوله المراد حرمته الهجران إلى قوله وأما ما كان من جهة الدين والمذهب، فهجران أهل البدع والأهواء واجب إلى وقت ظهور التوبة.

Severing of ties due to religious reasons – e.g. with bidʿatīs and those who follow their desires – is obligatory until their repentance becomes obvious.

In short, I beg those who have claims over me to pardon me for Allāh's sake for my past and future dues or to take equal recompense from me in the light of Sharīʿ principles and conditions while I am alive. As for after I leave this world, they must certainly pardon me. I convey the same subject in the form of a poem which I am quoting from a book:

If I have hit anyone or addressed him in a bad way, let him come to me today and exact revenge from me. Do not leave this for the day of Resurrection. I do not want to be disgraced on the day of Resurrection nor do I want to be remorseful before Allāh *ta'ālā*.

وهذا كأنه ترجمة لخطابه صلى الله عليه وسلم العام قرب وفاته، ونصه: قال عليه السلام: إنه قد دنا مني خقوف بين أظهركم وإنما أنا بشر، فأيما رجل كنت أصبت من عرضه شيئا فهذا عرضي فليقتص، وأيما رجل كنت أصبت من بشره شيئا فهذا بشري فليقتص، وأيما رجل كنت أصبت من ماله شيئا فهذا مالي فليأخذ، واعلموا أن أولاكم بي رجل كان له من ذلك شيء فأخذه أو حللني، فلقيت ربي وأنا محلل بي، ولا يقولن رجل إني أخاف العداوة والشحناء من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فإنهما ليستا من طبيعتي ولا من خلقي ومن غلبة نفس على شيء فليستعن لي حتى أدعو له.[1]

The above is like a translation of an address made by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam in the year when he departed from this world:

My death is drawing near, and I am just a human. If I have dishonoured anyone, I offer my honour to him and he can exact revenge from me. If I have physically harmed anyone, I offer myself to him so that he can take revenge from me. If I have wrongfully taken the wealth of anyone, I offer my wealth to him, he may come and take his due. Listen! The closest among you in my sight is the one who has any of these claims over me, comes forward and takes his due or absolves me of it so that when I meet my Allāh, I am free from all claims. No person should say: "I fear enmity and malice from Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam" because that is neither my nature nor my temperament. If any person is overcome by his self, he must ask me for help and I will pray for him.

Finally, I request the reader to make this du'ā': O Allāh! Free me from all dues and wrongs – either by enabling me to fulfil them or absolving me of them – before my journey to the

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[1] ابن سعد طب عن الفضل بن عباس. كنز العمال جلد سابع الاكمال من كتاب القصاص من قسم الأقوال، ص ٢٨٤.

Hereafter. Protect me from every type of accounting in the Hereafter.

ويرحم الله عبدا قال اٰمينا

May Allāh show mercy to the one who says Āmīn to this du'ā'.

Written by: Ashraf 'Alī
20th Ramaḏān 1344 A.H.
Thānah Bhawan, district Muẕaffar Nagar.

VIRTUOUS QUALITIES

The Compiler Is Excused

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā possesses many virtuous qualities. Several registers will not suffice to note them all. Hadrat Shāykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* says:

> Neither is there an end to his beauty neither is Saʿdī's speech ending. The patient who is suffering from eternal thirst is dying out of thirst, and the river too is still without end.

Therefore, whatever can be written in this chapter can only be to serve as an example. Anyway, this subject has already been written in the various previous chapters. After all, all the chapters of *Ashraf as-Sawānih* are filled with virtuous qualities. If these are collated under separate headings, then this chapter can be compiled as a chapter on its own. However, I neither have the time to do it – because my leave is almost over – nor do I have the capability to undertake such an important task because it is really the job of erudite scholars to understand, identify and explain virtuous qualities. If I have to arrange this chapter as described, *Ashraf as-Sawānih* is collectively before me. Once the entire book is printed and before me, collating the virtuous qualities will be possible. Anyway – Allāh willing – I intend doing that. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable me to complete this task.

A Request To The 'Ulamā'

However, I would like to direct the attention of the ʿulamā' to this important task first because they are really qualified for it. In such a case, I have – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – collated most of Hadrat Wālā's virtuous qualities as examples in this biography. There will be no difficulty for them to carry out this task. All they have to do is insert appropriate headings, explain the qualities academically, and to compile and arrange the various matters which are connected to the qualities, viz. incidents, conditions, practices, statements, bequests and so on (the simple way of collating and arranging this chapter which will be described further on will be referred to as "wāqiʿah" in order to facilitate understanding of it).

A Simple Way Of Collating And Arranging This Chapter

The simple way of collating and arranging this chapter is this: The biography must be read from beginning to end. The "wāqiʿah" (as referred to above) which proves a virtuous quality – whether one or many – must be highlighted in the margin with the letter (ف) together with the name of the virtue which it refers to. This must be done from beginning to end.

Once the headings have been identified and decided, several notebooks must be obtained and then start copying. Take one notebook, give it the name of one virtue in bold, and write the "wāqiʿah" under it. Give each "wāqiʿah" a number. If the next wāqiʿah is related to the same subject, give it the next number and continue in this way. If the next wāqiʿah concerns a different subject, take a second notebook, give it a name, and note the wāqiʿah under it. Since this will be the first wāqiʿah for this notebook, it will be numbered one. Continue doing this for all the wāqiʿahs, and have a separate sequence of numbers for the wāqiʿahs of each virtue.

If a wāqiʿah can be applied to more than one virtue, write its name over several notebooks, but note the wāqiʿah in just one while making reference to it in the other notebooks. For example, once you have noted it in one notebook, write the following in the other notebooks: "This virtue can be found in wāqiʿah number … As for the notebook in which the wāqiʿah is related, write at its end: "This wāqiʿah is applicable to these virtues as well:…" In this way, the virtue whose wāqiʿahs are spread over several places in the biography will be collated and placed in sequence under the same virtue.

If those who are carrying out this task are ʿulamā', it will be appropriate to first explain the reality of each virtue and its merits in the notebook of each virtue. The wāqiʿahs can then be listed. If a certain wāqiʿah does not clearly display the virtue under discussion, an explanatory note must be added at the end demonstrating how it applies to the present virtue.

There will be certain virtues for which wāqiʿahs will not be available in this biography. The different means of obtaining these are mentioned after the list of virtues which is to follow soon. If no wāqiʿah whatsoever can be found about certain virtues – neither in this biography nor in the other means which are to be listed soon – then refer to the heading which

follows this list. The heading is: “If wāqiʿahs for certain virtues are not available”.

The Title Of The Virtues And Their Headings

Once all the wāqiʿahs of the virtues are collated in the above described manner, it would be appropriate to give it the title *Ashraf al-Fawādil*. Designating the headings for these virtues is essential depending on the view of the compiler. However, I am presenting a short list of headings to serve as an example. They are 100 in number, but the virtues are not restricted to this number. In fact, they are limitless. However, the source of all virtues could well be these 100 because the others stem from these listed ones or give rise to them. Based on this, the present virtues are making mention of the others. I referred to this list as a “short list” because – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – Hadrat Wālā’s virtues are a manifestation of the following couplet:

ليس على الله بمستنكر – أن يجمع العالم في واحد

It is not far-fetched for Allāh to combine the world in one person.

Anyone who observed Hadrat Wālā closely and with an open mind will testify to what I said without any hesitation. Thus, even the longest of lists will be short. I had prepared this list without any specific sequence by casting a mere superficial gaze at all his qualities when I was deciding on the various chapters of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. Several other themes have been added now.

List Of Headings

Bearing in mind the name of the one who bears these qualities [Hadrat Wālā], I am naming this list *Ashraf as-Sifāt* and calling it *Mi’ah Sifāt* (100 qualities) based on the number which I listed. Since this list contains a list of 100 praiseworthy qualities – among many more qualities – both titles are most aptly named.

The list is as follows:

1. Servitude
2. Fear
3. Love
4. Sincerity

5. Steadfastness
6. Resilience and resoluteness
7. Maintaining of limits
8. Attention to Dīn
9. Judiciousness and caution
10. Expressing the truth and clarity in dealings
11. Attention to rights
12. Abstaining from futilities
13. Correct disposition
14. Farsightedness
15. Seclusion and aloofness
16. Bond with Allāh
17. Free temperament and independence
18. Desire for ease
19. Orderliness
20. Strict adherence to time
21. Alertness
22. Protection of the Muslim community
23. Attention to reformation of the Muslim community
24. Sound sociability and joviality
25. An alert heart
26. Good character
27. Refinement
28. Strength of will
29. Consideration to emotions
30. Feeling the pain of others
31. Simplicity
32. Forthrightness
33. (missing)
34. Gentlemanliness
35. Soft heartedness
36. Concern for others
37. Showing mercy
38. Giving preference to others
39. Meticulous gaze
40. Self appraisal
41. Desire for the truth and reverting to the truth
42. Blessing
43. Humility
44. Writing and oratory skills
45. High-mindedness and determination
46. Soundness of heart
47. Soundness of temperament

48. Extensive thought
49. Lofty vision
50. Self respect
51. Generosity
52. Bravery
53. Spontaneity in giving answers
54. Acceptance and handing over matters to Allāh
55. Reliance on Allāh
56. Gratitude
57. Patience
58. Clemency
59. Forbearance
60. Pardoning
61. Fastidiousness
62. Noble thoughts
63. Justice
64. Sharpness of mind
65. Intelligence
66. Pre-planning and consideration of consequences
67. Presence of mind and meditation
68. Equality
69. Acknowledging kindness
70. Foresightedness
71. Factualness
72. Profundity of understanding
73. Deliberation
74. All-embracing vision
75. Integrity
76. Trustworthiness
77. Sagacity and correctness of opinions
78. Abstention and piety
79. Sound planning
80. Moderation
81. Wisdom
82. Rectificational skills
83. Investigative acumen
84. General acceptance
85. Strong memory
86. Respect
87. Compassion
88. Sensitivity
89. Softness
90. Firmness in Dīn

91. Modesty
92. Striving and exertion
93. Opposition to the self
94. Contentment
95. Abstention
96. Speaking less
97. Nobleheartedness
98. Worry and concern
99. Conviction
100. Hope

Now when I look at this list, I can say that – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – many incidents related to these virtues have already been related in previous chapters. Those that are not related in this book can be easily collated from Hadrat Wālā's published statements and writings, and included in the collection. Allāh willing, the next chapter – Miscellaneous Matters - is going to be the last chapter. After completing *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, the last chapter will be left open and running. Various issues will be added to it without adherence to specific headings. Virtues are included in these issues. These various issues will be added to the biography from time to time. Thus, sections of this chapter – which will, Allāh willing, be published by the title *Shadharāt as-Sawānih* – can be viewed and incidents related to virtues can be learnt from them. If anyone wishes to collate them from this chapter, he can do it as described previously.

A Sample Of The Initial Work On Virtues

If anyone wishes to study samples of Hadrat Wālā's virtues immediately, a concise collection which was compiled by Hadrat Wālā's senior khalīfah, Janāb Maulānā Muhammad ʿĪsā Sāhib, is available. The collection does, to a certain extent, fulfil this objective. It is published under the title *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah*. Refer to it. Furthermore, incidents related to certain very special virtues have already been related in previous chapters. Allāh willing, they will be related in this chapter but will be very few in number because of time constraints.

The purpose of saying this is that the reader can presently suffice with these incidents which are to be found scattered in different chapters of this biography, but are many in number. He must also consider the conciseness in the present chapter

to be an elucidation because several ways are presented from which a considerable treasure of Hadrat Wālā's virtues can be obtained scattered and collectively. In reality, there is no need to use the incidents as proofs of those virtues because their presence in Hadrat Wālā can be observed by a person possessing the slightest insight. As Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> The presence of the sun is a proof of its existence.
> Now that the evidence has come to you, do not turn away from it.

Thus, even if incidents cannot be obtained for certain virtues, their absence will not damage the claim in any way. This is because the virtues are not dependent on incidents – they are merely there to support the claim, not to prove it. As promised, I now relate some incidents related to those virtues. However, before relating them, I present an essential cautionary note which applies to all virtues – whether mentioned or not.

A Cautionary Note

Qualities are of two types: (1) Those that are easily observed, e.g. the desire for ease, orderliness, attention to rights and so on. (2) Those which are not observed but proven through incidents, e.g. love, fear, sincerity and so on because these are essentially in the heart. As stated in a Hadīth:

ألا إن التقوى ههنا، وأشار إلى صدره

Listen! Piety is here! He [Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam] pointed to his chest.

No Muslim can have certainty in this regard. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

لا يزكى على الله أحد

None can express his purity before Allāh taʿālā.

However, some of the effects of these qualities are constant or almost constant and are indications of an overwhelming habit. They come to the fore because they are firmly embedded in the heart. This is the result of:

سِيْمَاهُمْ فِيْ وُجُوْهِهِمْ

Their marks are on their faces.[1]

The effects give an indication of the presence of those qualities. The remaining portion of the above Hadīth is a proof of this:

من كان منكم مادحا أخاه لا محالة، فليقل أحسب فلانا والله حسيبه أحسب كذا وكذا، إن كان يعلم ذلك منه.٢

If a person has no alternative but to praise his brother, he must say: "I think such and such person – and Allāh knows best what he is – is like that…" He must say this if knows that this exists in the person.

This principle must be borne in mind with respect to all virtues.

Note: This cautionary note was added under Hadrat Wālā's instruction. Cautionary notes of this nature which have been instructed by Hadrat Wālā in the course of editing this work are essentially the souls of this biography. These are the cautionary notes which makes *Ashraf as-Sawānih* worthy of its title and distinguishes it from other contemporary biographies. When reviewing the manuscripts of this biography, Hadrat Wālā paid particular attention to ensuring everything is accorded its worthy rank. Why should this not be the case when this is, after all, what is required of an erudite scholar and reformer of the Muslim community of the level of Hadrat Wālā. I now present the virtuous qualities which I had promised. We seek help from Allāh *taʿālā* and rely on Him.

Clemency

I had a relative who had evil thoughts about Hadrat Wālā. He developed these thoughts because he incidentally had the occasion of being in the company of those who bore hatred for Hadrat Wālā. When Hadrat Wālā happened to go in that area, my relative began speaking out against Hadrat Wālā to other people. He fell chronically ill not very long after that, remained in that serious condition for many days and passed away. I had completely forgotten about this incident and no one was even mentioning it when the deceased's brother who was not yet a

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[1] Sūrah al-Fath, 48: 29.

[2] للشيخين وأبي داؤد (جمع الفوائد).

murīd of Hadrat Wālā suddenly came to Thānah Bhawan. While he was engaged in the dhikr of Allāh *taʿālā* – and was between a state of wakefulness and slumber – he dreamt of his deceased brother and heard someone saying in a terrifying voice: "Cast him into the Hell-fire! He spoke ill of Maulwī Ashraf ʿAlī."

The brother related this incident to Hadrat Wālā via a note which he wrote to him. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "First of all, I strongly feel that it was not even a dream, it was merely your imagination. Anyway, as a precaution, I have specifically forgiven him because it has always been my general practice to pardon those who speak ill of me. I have also prayed for his forgiveness. As an added precaution, it will be good if you come and take some money from me and give it in charity with the intention of conveying the rewards to him. In this way, even if the slightest ill-feeling towards him is found in my heart, it will be wiped out."

This incident demonstrates Hadrat Wālā's high level of clemency.

Kindness

What can be said about Hadrat Wālā's kindness towards Allāh's creation! He even prayed for animals for a certain period of time. However, since he did not come across any Hadīth for such a duʿā' nor the practice of any senior of the past in this regard, he stopped it as a precaution. Later on he came across a Hadīth wherein duʿā' for animals is mentioned. The following duʿā' of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is reported:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اسْقِ عِبَادَكَ وَبَهِيْمَتَكَ، وَانْشُرْ رَحْمَتَكَ، وَأَحْيِ بَلَدَكَ الْمَيِّتَ

O Allāh! Provide water to Your servants and Your animals. Spread Your mercy and revive Your dead land.

Compassion And Fellow-Feeling

Allāh *taʿālā* placed the quality of compassion and fellow-feeling to such a level in Hadrat Wālā which is normally reserved for the super-specialist reformers. When the Turks were defeated, he said: "Allāh *taʿālā* has always maintained me in comfort, this is why I never knew what it is to be grieved. But now I have realized what grief is because the defeat of the Turks and

the humiliation of Muslims has afflicted my heart to such an extent that I cannot even enjoy eating and drinking.”

Even now, H͟ad͟rat Wālā adheres strictly to praying for the religious and material reformation of the Muslims, their honour and their victory after each of the five s͟alāhs. For example, he makes the following du‘ā’:

اَللّٰهُمَّ عَافِنَا وَاعْفُ عَنَّا. اَللّٰهُمَّ كُلَّ خَيْرٍ بِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَمُسْلِمَةٍ. اَللّٰهُمَّ أَعِزَّ الْإِسْلَامَ وَالْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ، وَاخْذُلِ الْكَفَرَةَ وَالْمُشْرِكِيْنَ وَلَا تَجْعَلْنَا مَعَهُمْ. اَللّٰهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ أُمَّةَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ انْصُرْ أُمَّةَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْحَمْ أُمَّةَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

O Allāh! Confer us with wellbeing and pardon us. O Allāh! Let every type of good reach every Muslim male and female. O Allāh! Give honour to Islam and Muslims and include us among them. Humiliate the unbelievers and polytheists and do not include us among them. O Allāh! Rectify the nation of Muhammad sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. O Allāh! Help the nation of Muhammad sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. O Allāh! Show mercy to the nation of Muhammad sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.

Soft-Heartedness, Mercy And Upholding Limits

Allāh *taʿālā* blessed H͟ad͟rat Wālā with an extremely pining heart and a heart-melting disposition which would cause him to become extremely affected and restless when he heard of calamities. The following prayers would spontaneously flow from him in a very pain-filled tone: “O Allāh! Have mercy! O Allāh! Have mercy!” Those sitting nearby would also be choked with emotion. Sometimes H͟ad͟rat Wālā would be so affected that he would say: “I fear expressing too much from my heart because – Allāh forbid – this fellow-feeling and concern must not reach the limit of a complaint [against Allāh *taʿālā*]. Remaining within the boundaries is like walking on the S͟irāt͟. And as per the view of some scholars, the S͟irāt͟ will be a physical manifestation of consideration of limits and boundaries. This S͟irāt͟ will be sharper than a sword and finer than a strand of hair. It is only Allāh *taʿālā* who helps. It is extremely difficult to remain within the limits without His help. However, if a servant continually endeavours for it and is concerned about it, Allāh *taʿālā* certainly makes everything easy for him.”

Protection Of The Muslim Community

Produce of mortgaged land

I was present when a man brought an earthen pot of sugar-cane juice as a gift for Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "I cannot accept it because it has been made from sugar-cane from a farm which is mortgaged. Although I know that the method of mortgaging of this particular land is permissible, how am I going to go around telling everyone this and explaining to them that this particular mortgage is lawful? Everyone will assume that I accepted juice from a mortgaged land, so mortgaging is therefore lawful. How can I allow my own worldly benefit [by accepting this gift] while causing damage to the Dīn of others? This I cannot do." Hadrat Wālā refused to accept it.

Hadrat Wālā's response to debates

Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion: "When I hear that our people were victorious over the bidʿatīs in a debate, I still feel pained because the masses will say to each other: 'The ʿulamā' are fighting among each other.' Debates of this nature are very detrimental to the masses. Debates and books written in response to false creeds have given a lot of coverage and prominence to the false creeds. If they were disregarded and no attention is given to responding to them, they would not have as much importance as they enjoy at present. False creeds actually gain more fame from debates while the results are nothing. In order to really wipe out the effects of falsehood, the truth must be repeatedly proclaimed and proliferated. This is certainly more beneficial."

Vigilance, Meticulous Gaze, Rectificational Acumen, Sensitivity And Acknowledging Kindness

A student wrote to Hadrat Wālā: "Make duʿā' for me and my heart also desires to make duʿā' for Hadrat Wālā. Although my duʿā' is not worth anything, what duʿā' must I make for Hadrat Wālā?" Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "If I were to tell you what duʿā' to make for me, it will result in my considering you to be my benefactor. Consequently, I will not be able to instruct and tutor you freely. You ought to have posed the question as follows: 'I want to make duʿā' for a Muslim, what duʿā' must I make?'"

After writing this reply, H̲ad̲rat Wālā addressed all who were present: "At first I became happy and began thinking about what duʿā' I must request him for. Then – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – I came to attention immediately and wrote the reply which I just read to you. The fact of the matter is that I have a very sensitive disposition. The slightest favour has a weighty effect on me. Now people will get ready to make objections and say: 'He even stopped a person from making duʿā' for him.' But they will not think of these intricate matters. What must I look at – the objections or the intricate matters of rectification?"

Resoluteness In Dīn, Softness, Modesty, Transparency, Humility, Love, Sincerity, Honesty, Consideration To Feelings, Profundity Of Temperament, Insightfulness

A scholar sent some of his written works and expressed his ardent desire to come and visit. He holds an in-between view on contentious issues and claims that this is moderation. He wrote: "My creed as regards contentious issues is the same as what H̲ad̲rat H̲ājī S̲āh̲ib has written in *FayS̲lah Haft Mas'alah*." H̲ad̲rat Wālā responded verbally by saying: H̲ad̲rat H̲ājī S̲āh̲ib's creed on such issues was one of refraining and abstention unless there was a strong impediment, and the doer was of sound beliefs and sincere. In such a case, he [H̲ad̲rat H̲ājī S̲āh̲ib] would not object. But the creed of this person [the scholar under discussion] is the opposite."

Someone remarked: "But there is some leniency in him." H̲ad̲rat Wālā replied: "There are different types of leniency. Some people are lenient to a certain limit, but then they are resolute in that leniency. In other words, if anyone is opposed to his leniency – even having proof for his opposition – he will not be lenient to him. In short, the leniency stops at a certain point after which it does not advance. People are deceived by his leniency whereas he is unyielding. My view is that a person must be firm in practice but lenient in his view."

Anyway, bearing in mind that H̲ad̲rat Wālā is extremely clear and transparent, he noted the reality of his creed and beliefs very frankly and added: "These matters have been mentioned because Dīn is entirely and solely made up of honesty and sincerity. Based on this, when you meet me, you may have this sublime opinion of me:

تسمع من بعيد خير من أن تراه

It is better to hear about him from a distance than to see him.

Or, in the course of our discussion I may become careless and say something which is against your lofty temperament. This would offend you and embarrass me. Now that I am writing to you in your absence, I can say without any formality that I love you. It may well be that this special love for you will progress and urge me to express my desire to meet you. I request your du'ā'. Was salām. I wrote this with the sole purpose that you may decide on whether you want to come and meet me or not after having obtained sufficient insight about me, and if you do come, you will come prepared. You must neither be deceived nor regret after coming here."

Although Hadrat Wālā is very careful about not saying anything offensive in the face of a person holding different views from his, he does this out of his own will; not when imposed by others. It is also Hadrat Wālā's practice (details about which were provided previously) that when a seeker seeks permission to come [to Thānah Bhawan], he never grants permission until it is clearly established that the seeker's sole purpose of wanting to come is to meet Hadrat Wālā. He does this so that it must not happen that a seeker comes here with a certain objective at the back of his mind, does not realize it, and then regrets over having wasted such a journey. With some people correspondence and writing of letters extends over several months for this purpose. Hadrat Wālā does not grant permission until they express their agreement to come here solely to meet him. In fact, Hadrat Wālā poses certain questions whereby – if the seeker is capable – the seeker happily writes of his desire to meet Hadrat Wālā. He understands the benefit of this and states that permission must be given solely for the sake of meeting him.

With regard to the scholar who was mentioned at the beginning of this discussion, Hadrat Wālā wrote to one of his own associates who was from the same Madrasah [of the scholar] and who had a bond with Hadrat Wālā since before: "I do not know why I am experiencing some reservation about him in my heart. It will be better if you are able to stop him in some subtle way."

The person wrote back to Hadrat Wālā: "When a Qalandar says something, he says it with knowledge and certainty. I was astonished when that Maulwī Sāhib [the scholar under discussion] expressed his thought about coming to meet Hadrat Wālā. He said: 'It is good that I did not receive permission to go meet him because I would have had to take a loan to go there [Thānah Bhawan].'"

The person had also written in his letter to Hadrat Wālā: "By Allāh, I knew from before hand that the sorcery of his [the scholar's] writing skills and knowledge will not be able to convince Hadrat Wālā and that he will not be able to get permission to come easily." Hadrat Wālā said in this regard: "I had made out that his desire to meet me was superficial. This was eventually proven."

Desire For Ease

Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred Hadrat Wālā with a very sound temperament on account of which he always likes ease for himself and for others. He never falls into difficulty unnecessarily nor does he put others in difficulty. However, when there is a need, you will not find anyone being able to bear hardship as much as him. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, this temperament is in absolute emulation of the Sunnah. A Hadīth states:

ما خيّر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في أمرين إلا اختار أيسرهما

Whenever Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was given a choice between two options, he always opted for the easier of the two.

This quality is observed on a daily basis by those who have to interact with Hadrat Wālā with regard to any work. A person will come to him with the most difficult and complex issues, yet Hadrat Wālā will find a simple solution to it. The issue which was considered to be unsolvable is then carried out with absolute ease. The statement of a well-known author and philosopher was quoted previously – probably in the chapter on Hadrat Wālā's journeys – when he wrote to Hadrat Wālā saying: "You create so much of ease in every matter while considering the views of others and seeing what is advantageous to them that it is difficult to believe it without experiencing it for one's self."

In reality, Hadrat Wālā not only creates ease in transactions and dealings but also in a major portion of Dīn referred to as Sufism. Pseudo-Sufis had kept it vague and difficult for many centuries, causing it to become difficult to fathom for not only the masses but even the elite. Hadrat Wālā simplified Sufism to such an extent that the lowest Muslim can very easily reach its highest level. In fact, Hadrat Wālā – by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* – conveyed people to its loftiest level and demonstrated it practically. Consequently, we see people from every stratum of society – the unlettered, the wealthy, the poor, the Nawāb, the businessmen, those with the highest Western education and those holding the highest positions – benefiting from Hadrat Wālā through Allāh's grace. They have become righteous people of the highest level. So much so that from each of the above mentioned strata there are many of Hadrat Wālā's associates who have reached the level of perfection and to whom Hadrat Wālā conferred the mantle of bayʿah and instruction [khilāfah].

In short, this Sufism which had become such a complex mystery that only the super elite were considered qualified to understand it has now been brought to the general view by Hadrat Wālā. He stood on the pulpits and explained its complex issues in very simple and clear terminology, and impressed it in the minds of all sections of the community – the masses and the elite.

In so doing, Hadrat Wālā portrayed the original nature of Dīn as per the Qur'ānic verse:

مَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

He has laid no hardship on you in religion.[1]

And its original form as per the Hadīth:

اَلدِّيْنُ يُسْرٌ

Dīn is easy.

Hadrat Wālā's merciful personality makes him – without exaggeration – a manifestation of that title with which Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* used to remember Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Aʿlā Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*

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[1] Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 78.

after the latter’s demise. He [Hadrat Gangohī] used to repeatedly refer to him as:

رحمة للعالمين، رحمة للعالمين، ثم الحمد لله الحمد لله

A mercy to the worlds! A mercy to the worlds. All praise is due to Allāh. All praise is due to Allāh.

The same attribute is also most prominent in Hadrat Wālā. All his teachings are essentially detailed explanations of the teachings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. All this is as a result of that all-embracing personality of mercy who is a fountain of blessings and the original mercy to the worlds – Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. A follower of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who also manifests this mercy is an heir of that “mercy to the worlds” in the light of the Hadīth:

العلماء ورثة الأنبياء

The ʿulamā’ are the heirs of the Prophets.

It becomes crystal clear from the statements and written works of Hadrat Wālā that he undertook a detailed investigation of all the departments of Dīn – a task which is demanded of a Mujaddid – and presented Islam in it original and simple form to the Muslim community. A personality possessing such attributes and qualities is undoubtedly an eternal mercy for the world.

An easy Solution for arranging this biography

I was experiencing a severe difficulty in the course of compiling this biography. I was recalling various incidents for the different headings and chapters which I had to insert in many places in the manuscript. This was causing the manuscript to become extremely untidy and a lot of time was getting spent in looking for the appropriate places where the additions were to be made. In fact, the need for such additions was felt in the summary as well. This resulted in the summary also becoming untidy and not worthy of being transcribed. Hadrat Wālā found a simple solution for this difficulty. I must continue noting the incidents as and when I recall them, and at the end of each incident I must attach a footnote with the heading or theme which it deals with. In the meantime, the one who is

transcribing everything must also transcribe it in sequence, but he must have a separate notebook for each heading.

In this way, the compiler will be totally free without experiencing any confusion. Neither will the manuscript have additions and notes in-between – as is happening at present – and at the same time the copier will continue transcribing the incidents related to the various topics on separate sheets or notebooks. In this way, each heading will have under it the various incidents which are related to it arranged in a collective form. Later on, a prelude will be written to each topic and attached at the beginning of the copy of that topic.

Subsequently, the biography was compiled in this way for quite some time and Hadrat Wālā's suggestion made things extremely easy. However, since a considerable portion of this biography had already been written in a particular style, it was felt more appropriate to maintain that style for the remaining chapters as well. However, Hadrat Wālā's suggestion was upheld in arranging the present chapter on virtuous qualities – as described in detail at the beginning of this chapter. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise on this, and may He enable us to enjoy Hadrat Wālā's blessings for a long time to come. May Allāh *ta'ālā* keep him safe and sound with wellness. May He confer me with complete suitability and capability to benefit from Hadrat Wālā as he deserves. Āmīn.

Detailed guidelines when delegating a task

Hadrat Wālā is extremely particular about providing detailed guidelines, a course of action and a clear and simple methodology when delegating any task to anyone. He does this so that the person does not experience the slightest confusion or difficulty. He will first explain the reason and basis for the task so that the person does not find it difficult to understand the objectives. For example, for the one who is transcribing the manuscripts, Hadrat Wālā includes detailed instructions and guidelines in the manuscripts so that he does not find any difficulty in transcribing. Very rarely does he have to revert to Hadrat Wālā [for clarification].

Nobleheartedness, Sound Management And Excellent Social Etiquette

Hadrat Wālā said: "Although it may appear very insignificant, if I have to pick the smallest of items in my house – a water-can, a matchstick and so on – I always keep it back in the place

from where I took it. It is possible that the person who kept it there had done so for a specific reason. Changing its place would cause the person confusion. I am always very particular about this. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I never act to the contrary.

Resoluteness, Caution, Desire For The Truth, Reverting To The Truth, Proclaiming The Truth, Transparency, Integrity, Sincerity, Self-Respect, Independence And Frankness

Response to objectors

If anyone objects to Hadrat Wālā in any way, he never tries to justify himself. If the objection is of an academic nature and acceptable, he will accept it, retract unhesitatingly from his previous view, and publish his retraction in *Tarjīh ar-Rājih* – as was explained in detail in the chapter on writing and compiling. If he is doubtful about accepting the objection, he publishes the objection together with his own reply in *Tarjīh ar-Rājih* so that the reader may choose whichever view he is inclined towards.

The above is with regard to objections of an academic nature. If the objection is of a confrontational nature, he does not bother about it in the least. If he receives such an objection via a self-addressed and stamped letter, he writes a lackadaisical reply in a tone which makes clear to the objector that his objection is useless and not worthy of any attention. For example, a person had written several useless and baseless objections to him. Hadrat Wālā replied: "I have many more shortcomings and defects, but I do not have the inspiration to publish them all. You ought to publish and proliferate them so that people do not remain in deception."

If the letter is not self-addressed, he tears it and throws it with the refuse. However, quite some time ago he received several confrontational objections at the same time. He treated them as he treats academic objections. Bearing in mind the strong Dīnī advantage of this, he published the objections together with his replies. He did this so that those who have confidence in him and also those who are against him do not remain in deception. People can study all the objections, his replies to them, and then make a decision for themselves and think whatever they want. This collection is titled *Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt maʿa Dirāyāt al-Hikāyāt* and was published in *al-Imdād*, Jumādā

ath-Thāniyah 1336 A.H. as part of his *Maktūbāt*. I think it will be appropriate to quote the entire introduction to this article so that its reality may come to the fore and Hadrat Wālā's temperament with regard to objections may be learnt. The article follows:

Introduction to Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt ma'a Dirāyāt al-Hikāyāt

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Since quite some time some people have been making useless objections against me. In most cases the objections are based on extremism and fanaticism. I never paid any attention to responding to them because I never considered them to be worthy of any attention. I also felt that – in today's times – responding to objections does not put an end to them. Rather, the issue prolongs resulting in a wastage of time and a failure to realize the objective. Thirdly, I have many and far more important tasks for which I do not have the time to complete. Fourthly, when I assessed my heart, I found that my intention in responding to these objections was not sound. I cannot speak for the sincere servants of Allāh *taʿālā*, but I can say about a person like myself who is overwhelmed by his self that my intention is that if I do not respond, my followers will decline and my rank will not be the same – the root of which is to gain the pleasure of the masses. And I am naturally averse to obtaining the pleasure of the masses.

Some of my close associates tell me that the general Muslims will be committing the sin of having evil thoughts about me [when they hear the objections against me]. This means that I must respond to the objections in order to save the Muslims from this sin [of having evil thoughts about me]. After pondering over it, I find this explanation to be contentious because Muslims are committing thousands of other sins, yet no importance is paid to save them from committing them. Furthermore, if similar evil thoughts are held about other genuine 'ulamā', then the same attention to remove those evil thoughts is not paid as it would have had it been against one's self or the one whom one has faith in. Rather, nothing is done in this regard. In fact, if we have some misunderstanding about those genuine 'ulamā', our selves experience some joy when they are humiliated. Our integrity demands that if anyone has any unreasonable evil thought about our fellow 'ulamā' or

fellow elders, we ought to defend them as we would defend ourselves or our own elders. How, then, can such a recommendation be accepted?

Anyway, if we go to the defence of any of our elders, this act of ours could be included in the ruling of going to the help of a wronged person – which is in itself an act of obedience. However, to do this for one's self is not an act of obedience. Although it is permissible, sometimes some people have a natural reservation to carry out even certain permissible actions. I experience such a reservation because it feels to me as if I am trying to flatter and win over the masses – they must not be displeased with me, they must not think evil of me, they have been misinformed about my wrong. If there is any worldly harm, there is nothing wrong in doing it. But if there is no worldly reason also, why should I tire myself in responding?

Decrease in monetary benefits and losing one's authority and position are not even considered to be harms for which so much of attention must be paid. This is my attitude in this matter. Based on the above reasons, I never tried to respond nor permitted my close associates to do the same. Yes, if a person who is not associated to me responds on my behalf without consulting me, I certainly felt happy about it but never advised anyone to do it if they asked me.

Reasons for responding

Recently I have been hearing some new objections – especially on the articles which were published in *al-Imdād* in the early months of last year – and a repetition of some old objections. The thought crossed my mind that some of my associates and adherents may possibly not know of these objections and are therefore adhering to me. Had they learnt of these objections, they would not adhere to me. This would mean that as long as they adhere to me and have confidence in me, they are in deception; and it is necessary to save Muslims from deception. For example, when an item which is being sold by a trader has a defect in it, it is necessary for him to inform others of the defect. If the trader does not have knowledge of it but some buyers claim that it has a defect, then although it is not obligatory to express the defect, clarity and transparency in dealings demand on the trader to say to other buyers what he knows about the item and what others claim about it. In this way, the buyer can hear both sides of the story, make an

independent decision and then have the choice of buying it or not buying it.

I therefore considered it appropriate to quote some of these objections and note my response to them according to my investigation so that people could see both sides of the story. Thereafter, those who want to establish or maintain a bond with me are free to do so, and those who do not want to establish a bond with me or sever a bond which they already have are free to do that. Incidentally, another advantage of this came to my mind, i.e. there are some people who are genuine seekers of the truth but they fall into doubt and confusion because they do not know the actual story or are unable to understand its reality. Such seekers genuinely want to remove their doubts and confusion. Removing such doubts from these people is a branch of guidance which is an act of obedience. In this way, this act of obedience will also be fulfilled at the same time. This short and concise article will contain those themes in the following sequence: First the background to the objection will be noted under the title *Hikāyat*. This will be followed by the objection of the objector under the title *Shikāyat*. I will then conclude it with what I feel is the reality of the objection. This will be titled *Dirāyat*. I will follow the same sequence with the next objection. Exposition of the facts in this manner is a Sunnah of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* as gauged from the following in the story of Hadrat Yūsuf *ʿalayhis salām*:

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُ الرَّسُوْلُ قَالَ ارْجِعْ اِلٰى رَبِّكَ فَسْئَلْهُ مَا بَالُ النِّسْوَةِ الّٰتِيْ قَطَّعْنَ اَيْدِيَهُنَّ ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ بِكَيْدِهِنَّ عَلِيْمٌ. قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُنَّ اِذْ رَاوَدْتُّنَّ يُوْسُفَ عَنْ نَّفْسِهِ ؕ قُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلّٰهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنْ سُوْءٍ ؕ قَالَتِ امْرَاَتُ الْعَزِيْزِ الْئٰنَ حَصْحَصَ الْحَقُّ ز اَنَا رَاوَدْتُّهُ عَنْ نَّفْسِهِ وَاِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ. ذٰلِكَ لِيَعْلَمَ اَنِّيْ لَمْ اَخُنْهُ بِالْغَيْبِ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِيْ كَيْدَ الْخَآئِنِيْنَ. وَمَآ اُبَرِّئُ نَفْسِيْ...

When the messenger went to him, he said: "Go back to your master and ask him what is the truth about the women who had cut their hands? My Sustainer knows well all their intrigues." The king said to the women: "What is the truth of the matter when you tried to seduce Yūsuf?" They replied: "Allāh forbid! We know of no evil against him." The ʿAzīz's wife spoke: "The truth has now been exposed: It was I who had tried to seduce him and he is surely truthful." Yūsuf said: "This is so that the ʿAzīz may know that I did not betray him in secret and that Allāh does

not allow the plot of the treacherous to succeed. I do not absolve my self...[1]

In other words, the essential purpose of this exposition is not to absolve and clear myself – although the acquittal is factual – it is expressed through other Dīnī wisdoms notwithstanding the fact that in specifying the wisdoms, there may be differences in the standards. Anyway, the norms of today are different from it. In other words, only the facts are presented, while the norms of today make an utmost effort to convey them to the masses. This is referred to as "to be in pursuit of". To make matters worse, some intelligent supporters also level similar criticisms by saying: "What is the need to even write on such topics" or "What was the need for such articles?". Whereas those who know me are fully aware that Allāh *taʿālā* made my temperament in such a way that when I have the slightest suspicion of confusion in any matter, I do not like to express it to even the closest associates, let alone to the masses. However, if I do not have such a suspicion and the matter too is not confusing – so much so that even if those "well-wishers" were to see such an article before it can come out into the open, they too would never say that it is inappropriate to bring out such an article – then I certainly do not have knowledge of the unseen in such a condition. Similarly, if unnecessary articles were given up completely, they could have had some room to say such a thing. However, it has always been the practice – in the past and present – to publish unnecessary articles with necessary ones. Thus, an article being unnecessary can never be an obstacle from its compilation unless some harm is expected from it.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, no harm was caused by these doubts. This is mentioned under note number one in the prelude to the article. Anyway, I do not even accept the view that there is no need for such articles because the removal of doubts and correction of deeds and beliefs are the greatest of needs. For example, the incident which is related in the following dream in the S̲afar issue of the periodical makes the need for such articles very clear. If any person who is overcome by his condition were to experience such a situation, he will be saved from incorrect beliefs, worry or the error of being outcast.

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[1] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 50-53.

This also repulses the doubt expressed by some well-wishers who stated that there was no need to even give a reply. After all, it is also Sunnah to remove accusation from one's self as had happened in the incident concerning Hadrat Safīyyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was in iʿtikāf. The reason for giving a reply is obvious – it is Sunnah on occasions which could cause doubt or suspicion. If this is not found, to what extent can we try and put a stop to baseless possibilities? After providing a reply, other doubts could creep up. In such a case, a full time court will have to be established for this purpose. If after all this, someone were to still accuse me of taqīyyah – as had happened from certain quarters – then what is the treatment for it?

At present, I have three conditions which I am taking into consideration. (1) The criticism of lovers and objections of opponents. (2) To collate all the objections and other faults, filter them and gather them in one place. (3) This collection [mentioned in point three] must be with the intention of presenting it to the people so that those who wish may continue their relationship with me and those who don't, may sever it. Three couplets spontaneously come to my mind in reference to these three conditions.

The couplet which makes reference to the first condition is composed by Mumin Khān:

Friends criticize me while outsiders embrace me. What is this Resurrection! Everyone wants to speak ill of me!?

The second couplet is also composed by the same poet. He says:

I embrace my own people, so do not pay heed to what others have to say. I have nothing to say apart from this.

The third is composed by Ghālib, but I made a slight change to it.

He is not loyal, nonetheless we will be comfortable with the disloyal. The one who is concerned about his own life and heart, why should we take the trouble to go to his street? (He is faithful to himself, he won't be faithful to us).

I hand over my matter to Allāh. Surely Allāh is watching all [His]. Servants.[1]

قُلْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَهُوَ الْفَتَّاحُ الْعَلِيْمُ

Say: Our Sustainer shall gather us all together. He will then decide between us with justice. He alone is the judge, the all-knowing.[2]

Note (1): The writing and compiling of these articles may have been done in contradiction to certain appropriate views. However, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* they are not in contradiction to Dīn. Whatever doubts and confusion which occurred among the masses were essentially with the objective of maligning and criticizing me. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* it did not cause any disunity as regards any Dīnī objective. Thus, in hoping for Allāh's pardon, I pardon all those who maligned and criticized me.

Note (2): I have appointed a sizeable group of scholars and righteous people with the task of casting a critical eye at all my writings. If they come across anything which is unworthy of publishing – according to them – they must either remove it or make a mark against it so that no one publishes it. As for any specific letters which I wrote as replies to certain matters, if anyone prints them without my knowledge, then these are out of my control. Now if the reader comes across any article which is suspicious and doubts whether it has been published from here, he must write a letter addressed to Jamāʿat Intikhāb at-Ta'līfāt, Thānah Bhawan, and not to me.

Note (3): Just as I initiated the system of *Tarjīh ar-Rājih* for doubts concerning the possibility of correctness, if the occasion is found, the system of *Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt* will possibly continue in respect of doubts concerning the impossibility of correctness. All matters are in the control of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note (4): There are six such doubts at present. Three from my opponents and three from my supporters. The two middle ones have weighed heavily on me, and the reason for it is noted in *Dirāyat* related to story number four. (written by Ashraf ʿAlī

[1] Sūrah al-Mu'min, 43: 44.
[2] Sūrah Saba', 34: 26.

Thānwī – may Allāh pardon him – on the last day of Jumādā al-Awwal 1336 A.H.)

Note (5): (added at the time of writing *Ashraf as-Sawānih*) There is a very weak and despicable objection whose answer is extremely strong and obvious. However, due to the stupidity and pigheadedness of the objectors, I felt the need to pay extra attention to answering it. So much so, the legal verdicts of the 'ulamā' of Sahāranpūr, Deoband, Delhi, the 'ulamā' who are residing in Thānah Bhawan and other 'ulamā' were obtained. All details in this regard can be found in the Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1336 A.H. and Shawwāl/Dhū al-Qa'dah 1336 A.H. editions of *al-Imdād*. Those who are interested in the details can refer to them. similarly, there are certain very shallow complaints with regard to the second addendum to *Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt*. However, their shallowness is customary while the shallowness of the previous objection is based on the Sharī'ah.

Articles of some 'ulamā' in reply to these complaints have also been quoted. The differences with the above-mentioned legal verdicts are the same as between the two forms of shallowness mentioned above. As I provided references for the previous legal verdicts, I am providing references for the present ones as well. They can be found in *an-Nūr*, vol. 3, nos. 5-8, dated Ramadān, Shāwwāl, Dhū al-Qa'dah and Dhū al-Hijjah 1341 A.H. They contain these headings: Attachment, Addendum to the Attachment, Second Addendum to the Attachment, Deed of Repentance, and True Wisdom.

Resilience And Resoluteness With Fortitude

Resilience even during the worst of calamities

By the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadrat Wālā is a fortress of resilience. By the help of Allāh *ta'ālā*, he does not waver even during the worst of calamities. I had the occasion of being present during the worst of calamities and also arriving after their occurrence. However, I always saw Hadrat Wālā devoted to rendering Dīnī services in that same peaceful manner which left me astounded. He himself says: "All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* for having embedded this meditation firmly in my heart: Allāh *ta'ālā* is the Ruler and the All-Wise. Bearing in mind that He is the Ruler, He has full choice and all rights to impose His will and control as and when He wills on His creation both externally and internally. No one has the right to complain or

object. He is All-Wise, every single thing which He does is based on wisdom even though we may not understand its wisdom. Since – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – His being the Ruler and All-Wise has become firmly embedded in my mind, the worst of calamities which are known as worries are never experienced by myself – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. It is a different matter for them to have natural effects on me."

Resilience in patience over his nephew's demise

Hadrat Wālā had an intensely close bond with his nephew (sister's son), Maulānā Saʿīd Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Wālā had such a strong bond of affection with him that he used to say that it has reached a level of infatuation. Hadrat Wālā was naturally affected by his demise. During those days, he used to say to me: "My heart repeatedly imposes on me to leave all my work and go to his grave. However, I go to pains in curtailing this imposition and do not act on its demands. I keep myself occupied in my tasks because I know that if I were to accede to these demands just once, it will become a habit."

The senior wife's adopted daughter passes away

Just recently, a six year old daughter of Hadrat Wālā's senior wife's brother passed away. The girl was a very loving child by the name of Matīnah. Hadrat Wālā's senior wife had kept the girl as her own and brought her up with genuine love and affection as if she was her daughter. Hadrat Wālā applauded his wife's patience and said: "She used to say: 'She is probably playing with Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* in Paradise.' The fact of the matter is that I never expected so much of patience from her because she loved the child intensely. I was so affected by her demise that I resolved to reduce my humorous playing around with small children. This is because I realized that the heart develops a bond with them and this results in pain later on."

The time when the above incident took place, I was commenting on the following statement of Hadrat Wālā in the chapter on Bayʿah and Spiritual Instruction: "Just as it is harmful for a seeker to become immersed in lawful activities, it is harmful for him to give them up entirely. Some type of lawful activity should certainly be maintained."

Based on his above mentioned experience, Hadrat Wālā added a condition to his statement which removes lawful relations

which engender love from the list of beneficial lawful activities. The specification and explanation of this condition can be seen in the appropriate chapter.

From the above incidents one can gauge the extent of effect which is found in Hadrat Wālā's fine temperament. Despite this, he never permits any incident to cause any considerable change in his essential occupations and practices, or for them to cause him to exhibit extraordinary facial expressions.

Resilience as regards his political stand

During the political upheavals [in the country], Hadrat Wālā remained extremely resilient and firm on the stand which he considered to be correct, viz. non-participation. He did this despite an entire world being against him. Although all types of pressures – even unlawful pressures - were put in support of participation – Hadrat Wālā clearly said: "Apart from the fact that acting against one's belief is deceitful, another reason which prevents me from participation is that I have an entire group of Muslims that is bound to me. As long as I am not convinced, I cannot participate and take the responsibility of such a large group. Will I not be taken to account on the day of Resurrection? I consider all these movements to be absolutely harmful to the Muslims, and I consider the methods which are resorted to gain the support of the Muslims to be by and large unlawful. Moreover, I feel there is nothing but harm in the consequences."

Hadrat Wālā's statement was an affirmation of the following saying:

> When a Qalandar says something, he says it after seeing and experiencing it.

The consequences were nothing but worldly and Dīnī harm. It seems as if Hadrat Wālā was a manifestation of the following couplet:

> All the people of the world have their own lives. Who can be an enemy of his own life? O beloved! All your enemies are the enemies of my life.

When the fervour and zeal of the political upheavals and movements ended, many of his opponents came to him and asked for pardon. Many extremists and fanatics had to soften their views before the correctness of Hadrat Wālā's views.

Hadrat Wālā says as a way of expressing Allāh's favour: "Everyone had to shift from his position in some way or the other. However – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I never had to move from my position on which I was from the very first day. I am still on that position. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I did not have to shift even an inch from my view. In fact, experiences have made me even more firm and steadfast on my view."

Hadrat Wālā also used to say the following during the political movements: "Even if I did participate, do you think I would have unilaterally prohibited everyone from continuing their jobs and so on? I would have laid down appropriate conditions and restrictions for that as well."

Sharʿī proofs affirming and supporting the correctness of Hadrat Wālā's views in this regard can be found in his various writings and statements. Some of them are quoted here in chronological order. Incidentally, they number ten, and have been given the title: "Ten Quotations". Each article will be quoted under a separate heading.

First quotation

A concise but essential explanation of Ashraf ʿAlī's published creed[1]

I commence in the name of Allāh. I praise Him and send salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

Towards the beginning of Rabīʿ ath-Thānī of this year, I published an announcement titled *Ashraf ʿAlī's Creed as Regards Current Issues*. It contained a statement which said: "I consider these insurrections and tumults to be a tribulation." I considered it to be sufficient to convey my objective. However, some people misunderstood it and unduly applied it to themselves. I am publishing this second announcement after feeling the need to explain this statement briefly. A few points will have to be understood first.

Two types of issues

Certain issues are absolute and do not allow any differences. Other issues are ijtihādī and presumptive. As regards the latter, from the very beginning to now, you will find a student differing with his teacher, a murīd with his shaykh, a small

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[1] Quoted from *an-Nūr*, Jumādā al-Ūlā 1339 A.H.

group with a large group, and a single person with several people. The ʿulamāʾ neither disapproved of this nor did one label the other a deviate and a sinner. Neither did one compel the other to agree with him nor did they harbour mutual hatred and enmity in the presence of such differences. Neither was anyone compelled to enter a debate. Consequently, when it comes to the issue of disputes, the differences which existed among the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and those who remained aloof are all considered to be permissible, and is known to all.

Two types of differences

Differences with regard to ijtihādī and presumptive issues occurred in two ways: (1) Differences on the basis of proofs. For example, the differences which exist between Hanafīs and Shāfiʿīs on the issue of reciting Sūrah al-Fātihah behind the imām. (2) Differences on the basis of incidents or obstacles. For example, the difference which exists between Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* on one side and Sāhibayn[1] on the other with regard to the marriage of Sabean women. Those who established that they are included among the People of the Book considered marriage to them to be lawful. Those who established that they are not included among the People of the Book considered marriage to them to be unlawful. In this regard, the difference is based on the investigation as to whether they are People of the Book or not. This is why there are differing fatwās. Another example is the difference which exists between the Hanafīs and Shāfiʿīs on the issue of visualizing an image while in salāh. The Shāfiʿīs consider the actual action to be related by the promulgator [Allāh *taʿālā* or Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] and therefore said that it is permissible. On the other hand, Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* felt that this would create an obstacle or confusion in one's belief either at present or in the future, and therefore said that it is disliked.

The application of a Sharʿī ruling

The occasion and application of a Sharʿī ruling is always to the entitled and not the title. For example, a person constructs a masjid on a property which he confiscated. The owner of the

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[1] The two students of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*, viz. Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* and Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh*.

property goes to an Islamic judge and proves that it was confiscated. The Islamic judge then issues a ruling to the confiscator to demolish the masjid and return the property to its actual owner. It will not be permissible to make an objection against the judge by saying that he caused a masjid to be demolished. This is because it is merely a masjid in name, not in reality.

The essence of the political movements

After the above preludes, it should be understood that the current political movements essentially revolve around two issues: (1) Mutual cooperation. Its rejection is known as abstaining from friendship. (2) Hindu and Muslim unity. Both have two levels of which there are no differences in one of each of the levels, and differences among the ʿulamā' and intelligentsia in one of each of the levels.

The first level of the first issue:

This refers to the employments and different forms of monetary transactions which – based on proofs of the Sharīʿah – are impermissible in themselves. 'Ulamā' have always been issuing fatwās of impermissibility in this regard and the fatwās are applicable to this day. For example, the giving of usurious certificates in employments or a transaction involving usury. Similarly, the friendly social norms which are the rights of Muslims alone or acquiring sciences and arts which are harmful to Dīn. Current situations cannot interfere with the ruling in this regard nor is there any difference between Muslim and non-Muslim. To use these as proofs for the current differences is really an incorrect discussion and a matter which is absolutely unconnected and misplaced.

The first level of the second issue

It refers to the unity which is essentially devoid of any conflict. In other words, both groups remain within their limits, carry out their religious obligations, do not interfere with each other and maintain the mutual rights of neighbourliness. This level is permissible in itself, and even now there is no difference of opinion as regards its permissibility.

The second level of the first issue

This refers to lawful hiring and leasing, trade practices, educational systems, mutual forms of helping, interactions, ruling and being ruled.

The second level of the second issue

It refers to the unity whose objective is to obtain freedom for India.

The ʿulamā' and intelligentsia differ on these latter two levels. Some of them consider this level of cooperation to be permissible, and this level of unity to be impermissible; while others hold an exactly opposite view. The latter consider this level of cooperation to be impermissible, and this level of unity to be permissible. We have now identified the point of difference. Now try to understand the reality and basis of the difference. This cooperation or unity is neither obligatory nor unlawful according to the Sharīʿah. It relates to permissible matters (*mubāh*) and is well known to the scholars. There is no difference up to this point. From here onwards, some of them feel that the advantages and benefits of non-cooperation with the government and unity with the Hindus are things which have to be essentially acquired. This is the view of those who belong to the Khilāfat Committee. They look at these impediments and consider both matters to be obligatory and lawful.

Others looked at the disadvantages and Dīnī harms – both at present and in the future – of non-cooperation and unity, and felt that abstention is essential. Details in this regard have already been published in certain writings. They looked at these two impediments and consider both matters to be unlawful. This is also my humble opinion. Based on this, I referred to it as "a tribulation" in my first announcement. This is the reality and basis for the difference of opinion.

The following points must have been gauged from the above:

1. The two views are not based on absolute proofs. Rather, they are ijtihādī and presumptive. There is therefore room for differences in this regard – even if a junior student differs with a senior scholar. It is not permissible for any side to criticize and malign; hurl abuses or curses; label as deviated, ignorant, flagrant sinner and unbeliever; impose on the other; wrong and harm the other either verbally or by any action; or to state that he is against or disrespectful towards a certain pious elder

merely on the basis of these differences. Yes, it is certainly obligatory to speak out against actions which are impermissible in the Sharīʿah. No Muslim disagrees with this.

2. The second point which we learn is that the basis for the differences is not differences in proofs. Rather, it is due to differences in incidents and impediments. Examples from the Sharīʿah were provided in prelude number two. Let me present one conventional example. The example of differences in proofs is like the differences in principles which exist between modern medicine and Unani medicine. Differences in impediments is like the differences which exist between two Unani doctors who – while they are united in principles – differ about a patient who is weak and is also overwhelmed by a certain contaminant. One doctor feels that as long as the contaminant is not removed, the patient will not regain his strength. This is why he prescribes a laxative. The other doctor is of the view that as long as efforts to regain his strength are not made, he will not be able to bear any laxative. He therefore prohibits the patient from taking any laxative. We see that both doctors agree on the issue of removing the contaminant and maintaining the patient's strength. Despite this, the impediments cause them to differ in their views. The differences in these two issues [under discussion] is of the same nature – looking at the advantages and disadvantages is the cause of the difference.

3. The third point which we learn is that the ruling for non-cooperation which has been termed "abstaining from friendship" by some people will not change merely by changing the term (based on prelude number three). Some people quote the Qur'ānic verses which prohibit friendship with unbelievers. They include this non-cooperation in these verses and label those who oppose them as opponents of the Qur'ān and thereby cause the masses to dislike and abhor them. This is similar to those who practise maulūd but refer to their assemblies as Dhikr ar-Rasūl (remembrance of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) and standing up [for the salutations – known as salāmī] as Taʿz̲īm ar-Rasūl (respect for Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) and thereby cause the masses to have evil thoughts about those who are on the true path by saying that the latter prohibit them from remembering and respecting Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Or the

issue of impossibility and possibility – where they malign us by saying that we claim that Allāh *taʿālā* can speak lies.

The term "abstaining from friendship" is being resorted to and utilized in the same way. Thus, it must be understood that coining a certain term or name does not change the essence. Therefore, the ruling too will not change. Moreover, it is totally unbecoming of scholars to resort to such stratagems. I have – according to me – clearly explained these issues, the differences which exist, and the reality of my creed and view in this regard. If anyone still wishes to malign me, I will say nothing more apart from:

فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيْلٌ، وَاللهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلٰى مَا تَصِفُوْنَ

Now patience is better. I ask Allāh alone for help against what you are describing.[1]

Was salām.
1st Jumādā al-Ūlā 1339 A.H.
Thānah Bhawan, Khānqāh Imdādīyyah

Second quotation

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib's statement with reference to current issues[2]

The following is an article which is actually Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib's reply to a verbal question which was posed to him with reference to current rumours. People of balanced temperament must study it carefully, understand the reality, and abstain from destroying their Dīn by slandering and making false accusations against a friend of Allāh *taʿālā*. (editor)

A few people came to Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat and said: "Many incorrect and evil thoughts are spreading among the masses with regard to current events. Some people are saying that Hadrat Maulānā is [Allāh forbid] opposed to the Khilāfat. Others are saying that you are happy at the destruction of the Islamic Sultanate. Yet others are saying that Maulānā is opposed to Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib. Some people are saying that some of your attendants are speaking ill of him [Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib] yet you are not

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[1] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 18.
[2] Quoted from *an-Nūr*, Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1339 A.H.

stopping them. Yet others are claiming that you are receiving money from the government."

In short, people are saying whatever is coming to their minds. It seems appropriate to publish an article which would remove the evil thoughts of the masses. Although these evil thoughts are not damaging Hadrat Wālā in any way, they are certainly hurting his Dīn. Hadrat Wālā replied to this request by saying: "Allāh *ta'ālā* knows that all these claims and accusations are incorrect. I am neither against the Khilāfat nor am I happy with the downfall of the Islamic Sultanate. Neither I nor any of my associates are opposed to Hadrat Maulānā [Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib]. Furthermore, I do not receive any payment from the government. I am prepared to engage in mubāhalah with them over these incidents. However I do not see the need for publishing such an article because it is not an essential of Dīn for people to have faith and conviction in me. It is enough for them to follow anyone who is on the true path." Someone said: "What you are saying is correct, but the people's Dīn is being destroyed by evil thoughts, false rumours and verbal abuses."

Hadrat Wālā replied: "What can I do if people destroy their Dīn with their own hands? Do they not know that it is a sin to accuse an innocent person? They certainly know it. Do they not know that there are no proofs for all the accusations that are levelled against me? They certainly know it. If they are attributing all these things to me despite knowing all this, it is as though they are committing sins wittingly and intentionally. What can I do in such a situation? Even if I were to respond, it would mean that I consider myself to be good among people and they must not speak ill of me. I am ashamed of saying such a thing. If I were to stomach this, I could be accused of having a motive for responding. How, then, can I repulse this accusation?"

Another point worth pondering is that every single person in the world is not immature and naïve. There are intelligent people among them who are fully aware of my situation and know with certainty that whatever the masses are attributing to me is incorrect and that the people are falling into sin by having unfounded evil thoughts of me. Thus, if there was a need to protect the Dīn of the masses, the way to do it was for those who are in the know to repulse the evil thoughts and be of use to the people. This would have been beneficial for them

because they have no motives while I could be accused of having certain motives which I cannot remove. I do not mean that I want this to happen because I have handed the matter to Allāh *taʿālā*.

The sole purpose of answering this question is to inform – through it – of the points whose redressing were within my choice. By this I mean pardoning all those who are falling into sin due to their unjustified evil thoughts, fabrications and verbal abuses against me. Well, I have pardoned them with all my heart. Anything beyond this is not within my control.

In short, the fact of the matter is that – Allāh forbid – I am not against the Khilāfat because it is a matter of consensus. Allāh forbid, I am also not happy by the weakness or downfall of the Islamic Sultanate. In fact, Allāh *taʿālā* knows fully well that whenever I think about the religious or material destruction of Muslims – which in most cases is as a result of their lack of foresight – an intense grief pervades every vein of my body. If I think about it while I am having a meal, the food becomes bitter. Allāh forbid, I am also not against Hadrat Maulānā [Mahmūd al-Hasan *rahimahullāh*]. Rather, Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows how much of love and respect I have for him in my heart. Yes, there may be differences in views over certain matters. Anyway, I did have such differences with Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* and – in fact – even with my mentor, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *nawwarallāhu marqadahu*. These personalities were also aware of my differing opinions, but they never felt offended. It is extremism in Dīn to label this as enmity.

Although Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* and Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* were students of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*, they differed with him on many issues. Allāh forbid, can anyone say that Sāhibayn were Imām Abū Hanīfah's enemies and adversaries? I seek forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā*. I therefore cannot understand how I can be labelled an adversary merely on the basis of difference of opinion in certain issues. The extent of my difference was explained in my announcement titled, *An Explanation of Ashraf ʿAlī's Creed*. Why am I labelled an adversary of Hadrat Maulānā? The point to think about is that my differences with Hadrat Maulānā were not born today. Rather, they are since a very long time. If this difference was harmful on a Dīnī basis,

why did Hadrat Maulānā not compel me to follow him or why did he not say that these differences are reprehensible? If these differences were on the basis of enmity, why did Hadrat Maulānā treat me with the same affection of a senior right until the end? All this shows that these differences were neither harmful in a Dīnī sense nor can they be labelled as "enmity". I cannot understand how people can pointlessly refer to it as enmity.

Furthermore, in the letter of Hadrat Maulānā which was read at the Khilāfat Conference in Calcutta, he clearly stated that caution and viewing the consequences must be observed in matters related to abstaining from friendship [with Hindus] and other matters. People must never follow their zeal and emotions without careful consideration and consultation (*al-Barīd*, 12 September 1920). This letter very clearly and frankly contains the order towards caution and consideration of the consequences. Now if I resort to caution and consideration of the consequences, and decide that keeping aloof from all these movements is the best course of action, am I committing a sin? Why am I being labelled an enemy of Hadrat Maulānā? Moreover, Hadrat Maulānā's verbal statements[1] and instructions consider this difference of opinion to be permissible. In short, it is an absolute slander to accuse me of being an opponent of Hadrat Maulānā.

As for the accusation that some of my associates are against Hadrat Maulānā *quddisa sirruhu*, my reply to it is that no one from my associates said anything audacious against Hadrat Maulānā – neither verbally nor by the pen. If any of them were to do such a thing, I would have severed ties with him for the rest of my life. Some people have accused poor Maulwī Zafar Ahmad and Maulwī Habīb Ahmad of writing such things. However, their writings display their intense faith in and absolute respect for Hadrat Maulānā. For example, they both write in their final message: "We have clarified this point in several of our writings that we were never opposed to Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* nor are we at present. In fact, we consider good faith in him to be a means for our salvation."

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[1] Some of these statements are to be found in *Dhikr-e-Mahmūd* (a short biography of Hadrat Maulānā). These have been quoted further on under Quotation Nine.

It is also totally wrong to say that I receive payments from the government. If anyone has proof of it, I give every person an open permission to present it. If he cannot present it – and he will definitely not be able to present it – he must repent.

To sum up, these are the facts but I cannot tolerate publishing them from my side based on the previously-mentioned reasons. Yes, if any righteous person wants to do it without the intention of absolving me and solely for the sake of protecting Muslims from Dīnī harm, he has such a choice – I am neither stopping him nor ordering him. My only focus is on:

فَاصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ

So turn away from them and say: "Peace!" In time they will come to know.[1]

Third quotation

Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib's testimony in favour of Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Sāhib and Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib[2]

We now present a testimony of Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* which he wrote in response to a question posed by Maulānā Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Sewhārwī. Muslims must take guidance from it and save themselves from Dīnī and material loss. Muslims will gauge from it the deep effect which the Dīnī greatness of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib Thānwī and Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī had on the heart of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind[3] *quddisa sirruhu*. The reader will learn how the latter detested and abhorred any evil thoughts and suspicions against these two personalities. Allāh *taʿālā* guides whomever He wills to the straight path.

The question posed by Maulānā Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Sewhārwī

Maulānā Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib sent a letter in the beginning of Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1338 A.H. to Hadrat Deobandī *rahimahullāh* in which he says that some people use slanderous words against Hadrat Thānwī and Hadrat Sahāranpūrī. Some people accuse them of being hypocrites, others say that they are spies

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[1] Sūrah az-Zukhruf, 43: 88.
[2] Quoted from *an-Nūr*, Safar 1340 A.H.
[3] The title of Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

who are in the employ of the government. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from such accusations and from evil thoughts.

[The following note is added by Ashraf ʿAlī]: I found the inclusion of Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* in these accusations extremely consolatory like the consolation which Hadrat Kaʿb ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* got from the inclusion of Hadrat Murārah ibn Rabīʿ *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* as expressed by Hadrat Kaʿb ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in the following words:

فذكروا لي رجلين صالحين قد شهدا بدرا فيهما أسوة بي الخ...[1]

The people mentioned to me two righteous men who had taken part in the Battle of Badr and who were worthy of emulation.

A poet says in this regard:

> Having shackles around the feet and living among friends [in a prison] is better than living in an orchard among outsiders.

The note ends here. The previous subject continues:

The Maulānā had also written that if he is permitted by Hadrat [Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*], he will publish the reply. He made a further request that the reply be written by Hadrat's blessed hand. Hadrat Maulānā accepted his request and wrote the reply with his own hand. It is quoted verbatim.

Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib's reply

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh.

I received your letter and was most astonished. I can never understand how any Muslim who knows these personalities can ever use such words against them as quoted by you. At the same time, I am most astonished at how you could quote those impure and vulgar words, and then plan to publish these answers in the form of a fatwā. Assuming someone uttered some of these words and thereby destroyed his Hereafter, can any intelligent person who has confidence in these personalities publish these false and filthy words, arrange them in the form of a fatwā and make efforts to convey them to the

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[1] رواه الشيخان مع غيرهما.

public?[1] We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* from the accursed Satan.

May Allāh *taʿālā* have mercy on us and bless us with intelligence. I hope that you will exclude me from such matters in future which I do not even have the courage to hear and whose hearing causes me pain and distress. If you act against my wishes, do not expect any reply from me.

Was salām
The servant, Mahmūd, may Allāh pardon him.
Deoband, 6th Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1338 A.H.

After receiving this reply, Maulānā Sewhārwī Sāhib sent a letter of apology. Hadrat [Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan] sent him a reply which he wrote with his own hands. A part of it is quoted here:

Respected servant, may Allāh protect you.
As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh.

I received your letter. The faith and faithlessness of the masses are based on their views. Their faith and faithlessness are therefore not worthy of consideration. I was neither displeased with you in the past nor am I displeased with you at present.

Fourth quotation

The lush garden on current issues[2]

Note: This article was not published until now because we were awaiting a commentary to it. However, many 'ulamā' had transcribed it when it was still in manuscript form. The commentary has now been prepared but the means for publishing were not available.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

This article combines rulings with regard to detailed issues. The need to write it arose either because previously a few

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[1] Unfortunately the time has come when the need was felt to publish this reply. (editor)

[2] Quoted from a hand-written manuscript dated – the middle of Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1340 A.H.

concise articles were published as general principles in which considerable attention to details was not given, or because replies to verbal or written questions became popular in scattered forms. Since no attention was paid to compiling them, the replies were quoted incompletely, resulting in changes and alterations. The need was therefore felt to collate the rulings with regard to the essential details. However, since most of the terms are of an academic nature, non-ʿulamāʾ will have to consult ʿulamāʾ in order to understand them. The article is divided into two: (1) issues, (2) proofs. I am writing both in sequence. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. His help is sought in every matter and He alone guides to what is correct.

First issue: The prerequisite for the compulsion of repelling unbelievers

Repelling the unbelievers is the unrestricted duty of Muslims especially of the Islamic Sultanate irrespective of whether it is a caliphate or not, a genuine Islamic Sultanate or an alleged Islamic Sultanate. Repelling the unbelievers from the salient features of Islam – which include the holy places, especially the Haramayn Sharīfayn – is compulsory on all Muslims. This compulsion is sometimes *fard ʿalal ʿayn* and sometimes *fard ʿalal kifāyah* depending on circumstances and situations but there are certain prerequisites for this compulsion. These are mentioned in the books of jurisprudence. One of the prerequisites is power. This does not refer to the linguistic meaning of power but the Sharʿī meaning as clarified by the following Hadīth:

عن أبي سعيد الخدري عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: من رأى منكم منكرا فليغيره بيده، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه...الحديث.[1]

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Whoever among you sees an evil must change it with his hand. If he cannot do that, he must do it with his tongue…

Obviously, the power to change an evil verbally exists all the time. The assumption that it can fall away is therefore not established. This proves that the meaning of "power" is that

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[1] رواه مسلم، مشكوة-باب الأمر بالمعروف.

there must not be a danger whose combating is generally not considered to be impossible.

Similarly, another prerequisite is that this repelling [of the unbelievers] must not result in more damage. For example, unbelievers are replaced by unbelievers, or unbelievers and Muslims are collectively subjugated by someone worse. In such a case, the objective will be lost. The objective is:

إخلاء الأرض من الفساد

Ridding the land of corruption.

The principle is:

الشيء إذا خلا عن الغاية انتفٰى

When a thing is devoid of an objective, it falls away.

Second issue: The permissibility of repelling unbelievers

If such a danger does exist, the obligation will fall away. As for permissibility, there are some details in this regard. There is no permissibility in some instances. In other instances there is not only permissibility but even desirability. The basis for permissibility, impermissibility or desirability is ijtihād or personal opinion. This would therefore allow two differences: (1) An academic difference in the sense that one person may observe the incidents and conclude impermissibility while another will come to the conclusion of permissibility or desirability. (2) A practical difference in the sense that although two person agree on permissibility or desirability, one of them acts on concession on the basis that it is not obligatory while the other acts on ʿazīmat on the basis of desirability. One does not have the right to criticize the other. If a Muslim has control of an area but he has entered into a peace agreement with the unbelievers, I would hesitate to say that unbelievers have control of the area.

Third issue: Non-cooperation

According to the Sharīʿah, a boycott or non-cooperation [with unbelievers] is not from among the elements of jihād. This can be gauged from the proofs.[1] Rather, they [boycotts, non-cooperation] are from among the strategies of repelling. They

[1] The proofs are provided at the end of this section.

are permissible in themselves, and not in certain cases where they pose dangers. It is possible for a person – based on his ijtihād – to say that they are essential. However, this obligation will be based on ijtihād and therefore not a proof against others. They cannot be considered to be from among the desired Sharʿī obligations. Like the second issue, based on different situations and demands, there can be differences as regards their permissibility, impermissibility or obligation. Moreover, the story of Thumāmah which is mentioned in the proofs [later on], proves that labelling non-boycotters as "supporters" is tantamount to accusing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* of being a "supporter".

Fourth issue: Befriending unbelievers

True friendship with unbelievers, that is friendship from the heart is absolutely unlawful. This includes the dhimmī, the one who is at war with the Islamic state, the combatant and the one who has entered into a peace treaty with Muslims.

ويستوي فيه الأسود والأبيض

Fifth issue: Superficial friendship with unbelievers

Superficial friendship – i.e. interaction which a person normally has with friends – also known as mudārāt for the sake of one's own monetary or egotistic advantage and benefit is not permissible. This is especially so if there is also the possibility of it causing Dīnī harm. In such a case, interaction will be even more unlawful.

ويستوي فيه أيضا الأسود والأبيض

Sixth issue: Mudārāt to protect oneself against loss

The same above-mentioned mudārāt is permissible if it is for the repulsion of harm. The possibility of harm exists and is not a far-fetched assertion.

Seventh issue: Mudārāt when guidance is expected

It is permissible to resort to mudārāt when guidance [of the unbelievers] is expected.

Eighth issue: Mudārāt due to weakness

It is permissible for Muslims to resort to mudārāt if they are in a weak position.

Ninth issue: Being good to unbelievers

Being good and conveying benefit to unbelievers who are at war with Muslims is unlawful, but lawful with those who are not at war. Those who are not at war includes those with whom a peace agreement has been made and the dhimmīs. There are two exceptions: (1) Doing good to the one who is at war with Muslims on a specific occasion when it is to the advantage of Muslims or when it is expected that they would embrace Islam [as a result of the good treatment]. (2) When a person is on the brink of death due to severe need, e.g. hunger, thirst, falling from an elevated place, or a building falling on him.

Tenth issue: Helping unbelievers

If helping unbelievers is going to be harmful to Islam, it is entirely impermissible irrespective of whether they wittingly harm Muslims or do not wittingly harm them, but the action has been planned to cause them harm. The ruling of impermissibility applies in both cases.

Eleventh issue: Impermissible help is forbidden

If a type of help is not going to be harmful to Islam but it is impermissible in itself, then such a type of help will also be impermissible.

Twelfth issue: Helping in permissible matters

If the help is not harmful to Islam and the type of help is lawful – and it is without compensation – then it will fall under muwāsāt and will be included under issue number nine. If it is with a compensation, its ruling will be mentioned under issue number fourteen. This too is not considered to be genuine friendship.

Thirteenth issue: Taking help from unbelievers

If taking help from them is on the basis of servitude, i.e. they are totally subservient to Muslims and there is no possibility of rebellion on their part, it will be permissible. But if the help is on the basis of equality or servitude [of Muslims] – as is happening at present – or there is the possibility of rebellion, taking help from them will not be permissible because it would be harmful to Islam. Taking their help under compulsion due to Muslims being subservient to them is excluded from this prohibition.

Fourteenth issue: Dealings with unbelievers

The above points contained rulings with regard to the genuine and superficial types of friendship with the unbelievers. Now try to understand the rulings for dealings with them. Transactions which do not entail the performance of an unlawful act are permissible with unbelievers. This is irrespective of whether the unbeliever is a dhimmī, one who is at war with the Islamic state, one who has entered into a peace agreement or not. Transactions which are prohibited by texts [Qur'ān and Hadīth] are excluded from this permissibility. For example, entering into a marriage with a woman who is not from the People of the Book. Other transactions and dealings are permissible, e.g. being employed by them, hiring them as employees, taking loans from them, keeping items as mortgage with them, giving gifts to them, buying from them, sending items with them. Some items are excluded in certain situations. Details in this regard are provided in the proofs [mentioned later on]. Points explained under the tenth and eleventh issues are also excluded. To consider these dealings in the meaning of mutual helping and aiding, and to therefore label them impermissible is absolutely without proof. Had they been based on proofs, the jurists would not have considered them permissible.

The underlying reason behind the permissibility of such a transaction is that it is to the Muslims' advantage either immediately or in the future, and not to the unbelievers' advantage. Alternatively, even if there is any benefit for them, it is not to the detriment of Islam. Transactions which could be considered to be forms of aiding others in some way or the other, the jurists themselves consider many of them to be permissible, while those under our discussion cannot even be considered to be aiding them, although they are certainly of benefit to them.

Fifteenth issue: Wearing clothing of foreigners

Nowadays many questions are posed with regard to wearing coarse clothing and clothing of foreigners. If the basis for it is to sever ties with them, the ruling was given under issues three and four. If this is not the basis, both are permissible but it is not permissible to imitate both the Hindus and the British.

Sixteenth issue: The evils and innovations of unity with unbelievers

The detestability of the evils and innovations which have crept into the objectives and ways are known. Take the following examples:

1. A leader said: "There is nothing wrong with chanting 'Jai' verbally. In fact, if you please the Hindu brothers, brothers hold on firmly to the rope of Allāh. As long as we hold firmly to this rope, then even if Dīn slips away from our hands, we will certainly acquire of this world."[1]

2. This statement: "O Allāh! One good act which we have done is that Mahatma Gandhi and I have become true brothers."[2]

3. An ʿālim said: "Allāh sent him (Gandhi) as a planner and organizer for us. Allāh sent him to teach us the lessons of planning and organizing."[3]

4. Taking idolaters into masājid to address Muslims.

5. To say that their footsteps purify the soil of the city.

6. To consider the assemblies which they attend to be like heavenly mansions.

7. To address him as a messiah.

8. To refer to him as a god of mercy.

9. To say the following in his praise: "Even remaining silent from praising him is a praise in itself."

10. To take special steps to put a stop to the slaughtering of cows.

11. To apply the Hindu mark on the forehead.

12. To carry a tripod on one's shoulder and carry it to the *marghat*[4] while chanting the word "Jai".

13. To decorate a sedan and place the Qur'ān on it together with the Ramayana.[1]

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[1] *Madīnah*, Bijnore, 21 February 1930.
[2] *Fath*, Delhi, 24 November 1920.
[3] Ibid. Quoted from *an-Nūr*, p. 226 and p. 1227.
[4] A place where Hindus burn their dead.

14. To say that we want to form a religion which would remove the distinction between Hindus and Muslims.

To label a person an unbeliever or flagrant sinner for not participating because of these evils or because of prohibition from the Sharīʿah. To be antagonistic towards him and to make efforts to harm him. To abstain from speaking out against these evils or not speaking out against them with the same level of importance that is given to popularizing these political movements.

When wrongs and evils creep into prudent measures, then the ruling is that if it is not obligatory to realize the prudent measure, abandoning it is permissible in every situation, and it also becomes obligatory or desirable in certain situations. If it is obligatory to realize the prudent measure – whether the obligation is unanimously considered or not – the obligation must not be abandoned unnecessarily. However, if there is difference of opinion about its obligation then the non-obligation of giving it up will be contentious. However, the evils will be spoken out against in every condition. The extent of the evil will decide the extent of the obligation to reject it. If there is any excuse, unity and agreement will be doctrinally obligatory, but in practice the person who believes in the excuse will be excused.

Seventeenth issue: The position of contentious subsidiary points

When Sharʿī proofs are established by both groups on contentious subsidiary issues, both groups will be equally considered to be possibly right and wrong. A large number of people in one group is not an indication of their being correct, nor is the small number of people in the other group an indication of their being wrong. It is an absolute fabrication to label the majority group's opinion as ijmāʿ.

Eighteenth issue: Assisting where there is Dīnī and worldly benefit

If there is neither any worldly harm in a beneficial action – which is considered to be excusable in the Sharīʿah – nor any Dīnī harm, then it is dishonourable to sit back. For example, when grapes are collected as a donation, and this helps the Muslims and the soldiers. Furthermore, the rulers have given

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[1] An epic poem of the Hindus recounting the exploits of Ram Chandra.

an open permission, so we must never lag behind in this regard. To think that the rulers do not really approve of it from their hearts is nothing but a whispering which should not influence a person.

Nineteenth issue: Du'ā'

A person who cannot make any type of effort should at least make duʿā'. In fact, even those who can make an effort must consider duʿā' to be their fundamental asset because the keys to the treasures of realizing one's objectives are in the hands of the True Master.

ما يفتح الله للناس من رحمته فلا ممسك لها، وما يمسك فلا مرسل له من بعده

None can curtail whatever [avenues] of mercy Allāh taʿālā *opens for people. None can open whatever He withholds.*

Twentieth issue: Differing views on various matters

This contains my methodology and counsel. Matters which are detested by the Sharīʿah, I consider it obligatory to abstain from them both in creed and in practice. Those which are unanimously considered to be agreeable, I consider them to be good in creed. As for in practice, I consider those which I can do to be worthy of doing, and consider myself excused from those which I cannot do. As for those which are contentious, I act according to my investigation and research. At the same time, I neither consider the opposing view to be worthy of criticism[1] nor do I invite any of them towards my creed. However, if a sincere person – whether he is genuinely sincere or portrays himself to be such – and my feelings do not consider him to be a liar, were to ask me about my creed, and I feel that he is confused or is asking with the intention of acting on what I say – i.e. he will not engage in any rumouring, debating and arguing with anyone – then I make it a point of informing him.

Apart from this, I do not say anything to anyone on my own accord. I consider it a point of integrity for a person to follow a

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[1] If anyone was criticized, it was on his evil action. For example, a person went beyond the limits as regards Hindu-Muslim unity, made a false accusation against me, maligned an opposing party solely because of difference of opinion on certain issues and labelled him an unbeliever and flagrant sinner, etc.

view which he is certain about its correctness. He must not cast it aside solely for material gain or for the sake of power and authority. Yes, if it reaches the level of compulsion according to the Sharī'ah – whether from the rulers or the masses – a person must act on the rulings which apply for compelling situations. He must not act in opposition to the opposing view nor make efforts against it. I give the same advice to other Muslims as well. If, after all my clarifications and soft approach, people still malign me, I can say nothing to them except for:

وَاُفَوِّضُ اَمْرِيْ اِلَى اللهِ اِنَّ اللهَ بَصِيْرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

I hand over my matter to Allāh. Surely Allāh is watching all [His]. Servants.[1]

وصلى الله تعالى على خير خلقه سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله واصحابه اجمعين. وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين. نصف ربيع الأول ١٣٤٠هـ

Proofs[2]

أما على الأول فما في الدر المختار ولا بد الفرضية من قيد آخر وهو الإستطاعة إلى قوله وشرط لوجوبه القدرة على السلاح لا أمن الطريق، فإن علم أنه إذا حارب قتل، وإن لم يحارب أسر لم يلزمه القتال. في رد المختار قوله القدرة على السلاح أي وعلى القتال، وفي الدر المحتار أورده بعد الحدود لاتحاد المقصود، وفي رد المختار وهو إخلاء الأرض من الفساد. ج٣، ص٣٣٦. وقد أفتى أستاذي بنصرة بعض أهل البدعة في مقابلة أهل الكفر لأن أهل الكفر إنما زاحموهم في البدعة زعما منهم أنها من الإسلام. وذكر النووي في حديث مسلم في تأويل شرط ولاء بريرة رضي الله عنه لبائعين ما لقيه والثانية والعشرون احتمال أخف المفسدتين لدفع أعظمها واحتمال مفسدة يسيرة لتحصيل مصلحة عظيمة...ج٣، ص ٤٩٤.

وعلى الثانية:فما في العالمكيرية: والثاني أن يرجو الشوكة والقوة لأهل الإسلام باجتهاده أو باجتهاد من يعتقد في اجتهاده ورائه وإن كان يرجو القوة والشوكة للمسلمين في القتال فإنه لا يحل له القتال لما فيه من إلقاء نفسه في التهلكة. ج٣، ص ١١٩. وفي رد المختار على القول المذكور أولا قوله

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[1] Sūrah al-Mu'min, 43: 44.

[2] As is the case with the original Urdu text, the Arabic has not been translated because these proofs are for the benefit of the 'ulamā'. (translator)

لم يلزمه لقتال يشير إلى أنه لو قاتل حتى قتل جاز لكن ذكر في شرح السير أنه لا بأس أن يحمل الرجل وحده وإن ظن أنه يقتل إذا كان يصنع شيئا بقتل أو بجرح أو بهزم فقد فعل ذلك جماعة من الصحابة من بين يدي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يوم أحد ومدحهم على ذلك، فأما إذا علم أنه لا ينكى فيهم فإنه لا يحل له أن يحمل عليهم لأنه لا يحصل بحملته شيء من إعزاز الدين بخلاف نهي فسقة المسلمين عن منكر إذا علم أنهم لا يمتنعون بل يقتلونه فإنه لا بأس بالإقدام وإن رخص له السكوت لأن المسلمين يعتقدون ما يأمرهم به فلا بد أن يكون فعله مؤثرا في باطنهم بخلاف الكفار.

وعلى الثالثة: ما في الدر المختار وعرفه ابن الكمال بأنه يدل الوسع في القتال في سبيل الله مباشرة أو معاونة بمال أو رأي أو تكثير سواد أو غير ذلك. وفي رد المختار كمداواة الحجر حي وتهيئة المطاعم والمشارب. ج ٣، ص ٣٣٦. وفي صحيح البخاري في قصة ثمامة بن أثال فلما قدم مكة (يعني بعد الإسلام) قال له قائل: صبوت. قال: لا ولكن أسلمت مع محمد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. قال الحافظ في الفتح: زاد ابن هشام: ثم خرج إلى اليمامة فمنعهم أن يحملوا إلى مكة شيئا. فكتبوا إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إنك تأمر بصلة الرحم. فكتب إلى ثمامة أن يخلي بيهم وبين الحمل إليهم. ج٨، ص٦٩. وفيه أيضا ج٨، ص ٦٨ وكانت قصة (يعني ثمامة) قبل وفد بني حنيفة بزمان. فإن القصة صريحة في أنهما كانت قبل فتح مكة. وفي الهداية بعد المنع من بيع السلاح والحديد من أهل الحرب ولو بعد الموادعة ما نصه، وهذا هو القياس في الطعام والثوب إلا أنا عرفناه بالنص فإنه عليه السلام أمر ثمامة أن يمير أهل مكة وهم حرب على...

وعلى الرابعة: قوله تعالى: يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تتخذوا اليهود والنصارى أولياء. وقوله تعالى: يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تتخذو عدوي وعدوكم أولياء تلقون إليهم بالمودة.

وعلى الخامسة: قوله تعالى: أيبتغون عندهم العزة فإن العزة لله جميعا.

وعلى السادسة: قوله تعالى: إلا أن تتقوا منهم تعاة. وقوله تعالى: فترى الذين في قلوبهم مرض يسارعون فيهم يقولون نخشى أن تصيبنا دائرة.

وعلى السابعة: قوله تعالى: فأنت له تصدى.

وعلى الثامنة: ما روى أبو داؤد أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنزل وفد بني ثقيف في مسجده...

وعلى التاسعة: قوله تعالى: لا ينهاكم الله عن الذين لم يقاتلوكم في الدين ولم يخرجوكم من دياركم أن تبروهم وتقسطوا إليهم. إن الله يحب المقسطين. إنما ينهاكم الله عن الذين قاتلوكم في الدين وأخرجوكم من دياركم وظاهروا على إخراجكم أن تولوهم ومن يتولهم فأولئك هم الظالمون.

في العالمكيرية: ولا بأس بأن يصل الرجل المسلم المشرك قريبا كان أو بعيدا، محاربا كان أو ذميا. وأراد بالمحارب المستأمن. وأما إذا كان غير المستأمن فلا ينبغي للمسلم أن يصله بشيء، كذا في المحيط. وذكر القاضي الإمام ركن الإسلام علي السفدي إذا كان حربيا في دار الحرب وكان الحال حال مسالمة وصلح، فلا بأس بأن يصله، كذا في التاتار خانية، ج٦، ص٢٣٢. من تتمة إمداد الفتاوى، وفي حاشية العلامة شيخزاده على البيضاوي وثانيها المعاشرة الجميلة في الدنيا بحسب الظاهر، وذلك غير ممنوع منه، وقال عليه السلام في كل ذات كبد رطبة أجر.

وعلى العاشرة والحادية عشر: قوله تعالى: ولا تعاونوا على الإثم والعدوان.

وعلى الثالثة عشر: ما في الدر المختار: أو دل الذمي على الطريق ومفاده جواز الإستعانة بالكافر عند الحاجة وقد استعان عليه السلام باليهود على اليهود. في رد المختار: قوله عند الحاجة أما بدونها فلا لأنه لا يومن غدره. قوله وقد استعان عليه الصلوة السلام الخ ذكر في الفتح أن في سنده ضعفا، وأن جماعة قالوا لا يجوز لحديث مسله أنه عليه الصلوة والسلام خرج إلى بدر فلحقه رجل مشرك فقال إرجع فلن استعين بمشرك الحديث. وروى رجلان ثم قال: وقال الشافعي رده عليه الصلوة والسلام المشرك والمشركين كان في غزوة بدر ثم أنه عليه الصلوة والسلام استعان في غزوة خيبر بيهود من بني قينقاع وفي غزوة حنين بصفوان ابن أمية وهو مشرك، فالرد إن كان لأجل أنه كان مخير أبين الاستعانة وعدمها فلا مخالفة بين الحديثين، وإن كان لأجل أنه مشرك فقد نسخه ما بعد. ج٣، ص ٣٣٦.

وفي فتح القدير: ولا بأس أن يستعان بالمشركين على قتال المشركين إذا خرجوا طوعا ويرضخ لهم ولا يسهم ولا يكون لهم راية تخصهم الخ (ج٥، ص٢٤٣). وفي رد المختار باب الجمعة في معراج الدراية من المبسوط البلاد التي في أيدي الكفار بلاد الإسلام لا بلاد الحرب لأنهم لم يظهروا فيها حكم الكفر بل القضاة والولاة مسلمون يطيعونهم من ضرورة أو بدونها، وكل مصرفيها وال من جهتهم يجوز فيه إقامة الجمعة والأعياد الخ (ج١، ص٨٤٢). وقد عرف إطاعة الصحابة والتابعين ليزيد والحجاج وإطاعة العلماء للتتار في بغداد. وفي تفسير ابن جرير إلا أن تتقوا منهم

تقاة: إلا أن تكونوا في سلطانهم فتخافونهم على أنفسكم فتظهروا لهم الولاية بألسنتكم وتضمروا لهم العداوة ولا تناجوهم على ما هم عليه من الكفر ولا تعينوهم على مسلم بفعل...

وعلى الرابعة عشر: ما في الرياض: جلس رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى ينزع لليهود كل دلو بمتمرة حتى اجتمع له شيء من التمر (وفي الإجارة) وفي ابن خلدون وابن هشام استأجر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عبد الله بن أريقط الدئولي وكان كافرا (وفيه الإستيجار) وفي المشكوة عن علي أن يهوديا كان يقال له فلان حبر كان له على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دنانير فتقاضى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال له يا يهودي، ما عندي ما أعطيك الخ (وفيه القرض) وفي صحيح البخاري قد رهن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم درعا له بالمدينة عند يهودي وأخذ شعيرا له (وفيه الرهن) وفي الروض الأنف أهدى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى أبي سفيان عجوة واستهداه أدمًا فأهداه أبو سفيان وهو على شركه (وفيه الإهداء والإستهداء). وفي المحيط إذا خرج للتجارة إلى أرض العدو بأمان فإن كان أمر لا يخاف عليه منه وكانوا قوما يوفون بالعهد يعرفون بذلك وله في ذلك منفعة فلا بأس. وفي الهندية إذا أراد المسلم أن يدخل دار الحرب بأمان للتجارة لم يمنع ذلك منه وكذلك إذا أراد حمل الأمتعة إليهم.

في البحر في القنية: لا يمنع من إدخال البغال والحمير والثور والبعير فيها. فإن كان خزا من ابريسم أو ثيابا دقاقا من القز، فلا بأس بإدخالها إليهم، ولا بإدخال الصفر والشبه إليهم لأن هذا لا يستعمل للسلاح، وفيها قال محمد لا بأس بأن يحمل المسلم إلى أهل الحرب ما شاء إلا الكرع والسلاح (وفي هذه الروايات البيع والشراء منهم إلا ما استثنى). وفي الهداية من أرسل جيرا له مجوسيا أو خادما الخ. وفي فتاوى الإمام طاهر البخاري مسلم آجر نفسه من مجوسي لا بأس به. وفي الروض الأنف براء ملاعب الأسنة أرسل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أني قد أصابني وجع أحسبه، قال يقال له الدبيلة فابعث أرسل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بعكة عسل وأمره أن يستشفي (من رسالة النور). وفي الدر المختار كتاب القضاء: ويجوز تقلد القضاء من السلطان العادل والجائر ولو كافرا. ذكره مسكين وغيره إلا إذا كان يمنعه عن القضاء بالحق فيحرم. وفي الدر المختار: وجاز بيع عصير عنب ممن يعلم أنه يتخذه خمرا لأن المعصية لا تقوم بعينه بل بعد تغيره، وقيل يكره لإعانته على المعصية إلى قوله بخلاف بيع أمرد ممن يلوط به، وبيع سلاح من أهل الفتنة لأن المعصية تقوم بعينه. وفي رد المحتار عن النهر وعلم من هذا أنه لا يكره بيع ما لم تقم

المعصية به كبيع الجارية المغنية والكبش النطوح والحمامة الطيارة والعصير والخشب ممن يتخذ من المعازف.

وما في بلوغ الخانية من أنه يكره بيع الأمرد من فسق يعلم أنه يعصي به مشكل، والذي جزم به الزيلعي في الحظر والإباحة أنه لا يكره بيع جارية ممن يأتيها في دبرها أو بيع غلام من لوطي وهو الموافق لما مرد عندي أن ما في الخانية محمول على كراهة التنزيه، وهو الذي تطمئن إليه النفوس إذ لا يشكل أنه وإن لم يكن له معينا أنه متسبب في الإعانة، ولم أر من تعرض لهذا. (ج٥، ص٣٨٥) وفي صحيح البخاري عن عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر ثم جاء مشرك مشعان طويل بغنم يسوقها، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بيعًا أم عطية، قال لا بل أبيع، فاشترى منه شاة. قال العيني: كره أهل العلم ذلك (أي الإجارة من الكافر) إلا لضرورة بشرطين. أحدهما أن يكون عمله فيما يحل لمسلم. والآخر لا يعينه على ما هو ضرر المسلمين. وقال ابن حجر: معاملة الكافر جائزة إلا ما يستعين به أهل الحرب على المسلمين.

وعلى الخامسة عشر: ما في الثالثة والرابعة عشر.

وعلى السادسة عشر: كون قبح هذه الأمور ظاهر. وفي الدر المختار باب الجنائز وتزجز النائحة ولا يترك اتباعها لأجلها، أي لأجل النائحة لأن السنة لا تترك بما اقترن بها من البدعة، ولا يرد الوليمة حيث يترك حضورها لبدعة فيها للفارق بأنهم لو تركوا المشي مع الجنازة لزم عدم انتظاهما ولا كذلك الوليمة لوجود من يأكل الطعام، عن أبي السعود (ج١، ص٩٣٢).

وعلى السابعة عشر: تعامل علماء الأمة على عدم تركهم واحد من الأقوال المجتهد فيها بهذا العذر، كثير من مسائل الحنفية شأنه كذلك، كنفاذ قضاء القاضي ظاهرا وباطنا، وإباحة الربو في دار الحرب، وعدم الترجيح بكثرة الأدلة، ونحوها. ولا يراد بالسواد الأعظم هذا الكثرة، وإلا لوجب ترك أقوال أبي حنيفة رحمه الله التي شأنها كذلك، مثلا واللازم منتف فكذا الملزوم، وفي البراهين القاطعة عن التوضيح: السواد الأعظم عامة المسلمين ممن هو أمة مطلقة، والمراد بالأمة المطلقة أهل السنة والجماعة، وهم الذين طريقهم طريق الرسول عليه السلام والصحابة دون أهل البدع. فكأن المراد بالسواد الأعظم هم أهل السنة والجماعة سواء كانوا متفقين أو مختلفين، فلا يجوز الخروج عن اتباعهم إلى اتباع أهل البدع ولو بأخذ قول بعض منهم، وإن كان هذا البعض قليلا.

وفي المنار ونور الأنوار في تعريف الإجماع اتفاق مجتهدين من أمة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم في عصر واحد على أمر قولي أو فعلي، والشرط إجماع الكل وخلاف الواحد مانع كخلاف الأكثر.

وعلى الثامنة عشر والتاسعة عشر والعشرون: ظاهر غير خفي.

Fifth quotation

Hikāyatush Shikāyāt[1]

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, salutations and peace to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

These new political upheavals commenced since some time. Everyone is aware of the criticism and curses which are being hurled at me from certain quarters. However, I never bothered about them and did not give any attention to replying to them. Just on one occasion I clarified my stand and creed, and some associates published a statement of mine in this regard. That too did not prove to be beneficial. When it was realized that criticism and hurling curses were the only objectives, and that investigation and justice are missing, I decided to remain absolutely silent. Quite some time passed in this way. However, a new issue cropped up. In the beginning of Safar 1341 A.H. I saw a poster pasted in the lanes and alleys of my village. It was published by some "well-wishers" and made reference to a letter[2] allegedly from Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *nawwarallāhu marqadahu*. It was claimed in the poster that the letter was received by Muhammad Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Dehlawī who is presently residing in Murādābād, in the paper, *Akhbār Hummdumm*.

It contains a few questions and answers, and the person claims to have received it in Dhū al-Hijjah 1338 A.H. The questioner referred to myself as one who is against the present political movements, and he wanted to know the ruling with regard to anyone who is against the political movements. He then quoted this reply: "The present movement is very good and it is *fard-e-ʿayn* on every Muslim to participate in it. Anyone who is against it is an enemy of Islam, and this is a major sin." He also quoted this reply: "I do not consider it good to get into the

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1 *An-Nūr*, Safar 1341 A.H.

2 Quotation number six clearly proves that this letter is fabricated.

specifics, but what I can say is that the same rule applies to anyone who is against this movement."

This article could have two effects. (1) There could be an addition to the criticisms and curses which are being hurled at me. This is something which I can bear. As the saying goes, "it is the same to a dead person whether you pour two loads of soil on his grave or a hundred loads". In Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1339 A.H. I published a general announcement wherein I pardoned everyone. I did this with the hope of obtaining Allāh's pardon. I made mention of it later on. (2) Someone could create evil thoughts about Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* (who is my teacher, and whose love and confidence I consider to be a good fortune for myself) in the heart of one of my naïve friends. This is something which I can never tolerate. I wish to write these few lines in order to repulse such thoughts [about Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*].

As for whether this letter is really from Hadrat or not, I cannot say anything without seeing the original letter. Although certain points in this letter create doubts about its authenticity, I cannot say anything without ascertaining the facts. If anyone is desirous of verifying it, the names of the last publishers or those who authorized its publication are as follows: Munshī Rafīq Ahmad Sāhib, the editor of *al-Imdād* Thānah Bhawan, Qādī Muhammad Akram Sāhib Thānwī and Hāfiz Ihsān al-Haq Sāhib Thānwī, or from the editor of *Akhbār Hummdumm*. They must obtain the full postal address of Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib and ask him for the original letter. If he declines to post it, they must go to him with a reliable person who is fully conversant with Hadrat Maulānā's handwriting, and the letter must be shown to him. Some people feel that this Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib hails from Siyuhārah but – for some reason – claims to be a Dehlawī [resident of Delhi] who is presently residing in Murādābād. However, I am not saying anything in this regard as well. This should also be verified as a precaution.

Anyway, no matter who, if it is verified that the letter is not from Hadrat [Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib], the entire incident is over. If it is verified that it is his, there will be two types of observers: (1) Those who have faith and confidence in Hadrat. Based on the obvious demands of the letter and without inquiring about the reality, they will have evil thoughts

about me. I give them permission to do this. (2) Those who have noble thoughts about me and will start experiencing whisperings about Hadrat. Since I do not permit them to have such whisperings about Hadrat, I will show them how to repulse these whisperings.

Dirāyat

In his reply, Hadrat did not make reference to whether he accepts or rejects what the questioner said about me, i.e. I am against him. Instead, in the letter under discussion, he did not consider it appropriate to get into specifics. In this way, he drew attention to the fact that he [Hadrat] did not approve of taking any person's name when posing a question. Even in the prelude to the answers, the following is stated: Especially because of some of your inappropriate questions. The reason is obvious, i.e. one cannot rely on narrations and stories which are floating around in these times. People quote others without verifying whether they really said it or not. In most cases they are proved to be wrong. We witness this all the time. Just recently we received a letter from Munshī Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Faydābādī in Makkah Muʿazzamah. He is well known to the attendants in the Gangohī court. In his letter he refutes a similar rumour.

Refer to point number one at the end. In short, it has been learnt that Hadrat did not issue any specific ruling on me, rather, on the person who is against it. Now we have to ascertain whether I am against it or not. Before getting there, we will have to understand the reality of the opposition.

Its reality is not merely a difference of opinion, i.e. even if it is based on a proof of the Sharīʿah. If not, it will necessarily mean that the one who differs on any obligation (even if the obligation is based on Ijtihād and even if it is based on a proof of the Sharīʿah) he will be committing a major sin. In such a situation, reading Sūrah al-Fātihah behind the imām which is *fard-e-ʿayn* according to many Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* will be considered a major sin for the Hanafīs based on their differing opinion in this regard. We learn from this that a blameworthy difference of opinion refers to where an issue is proven by a proof which is absolute in its evidence and import, and then someone differs with it or argues against it. Or, it is proven by a non-absolute proof, and not discussed merely on the basis of some opinion.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā himself did not consider it to be absolute. Just recently, an ʿālim in Pānīpat who was especially close to H̲ad̲rat related a statement of H̲ad̲rat to me. The ʿālim said to me: “When H̲ad̲rat heard your writings and views, he said: ‘Dissension is not good. The thought is coming into my mind that I myself should shift away from my opinion.’” Some changes may have taken place in the wording, but the theme is the same. Obviously, discarding an absolute or shifting away from it can never be permissible in any situation. This clearly proves that H̲ad̲rat too does not consider these issues to be absolutes. Since they are not really absolutes, as is obvious, then – Allāh forbid – how can H̲ad̲rat go against the reality and consider them to be absolutes?! Furthermore, the fact that these issues are based on Ijtihād was proven previously, there is no need to repeat it here. However, I am quoting a few selected proofs of the Sharīʿah in support of this creed so that it may be learnt that these differences are not based on mere opinions [but on Sharʿī proofs].

قال الله تعالى: إلا ان تتقوا منهم تقاة. وقال تعالى: واعدوا لهم ما استطعتم من قوة. وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في الإستطاعة: من رأى منكم منكرا فليغيره بيده، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه، فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه. رواه مسلم. وفي الدر المختار: ولا بد لفريضته من قيد اٰخر، وهو الإستطاعة إلى قوله وشرط لوجوبه القدرة على السلاح. وفي العالمكيرية وإن كان لا يرجو القوة والشركة للمسلمين فإنه لا يحل القتال لما فيه من إلقاء نفسه في التهلكة. وفي فتح القدير: ولا بأس أن يستعان بالمشركين على قتال المشركين إذا خرجوا طوعا ويرضخ لهم ولا يسهم لهم ولا يكون لهم راية تخصهم. وفي الهندية قال محمد: لا بأس بأن يحمل المسلم إلى أهل الحرب ما شاء إلا الكراع والسلاح. وفي الدر المختار: وجاز بيع عصير عنب ممن يعلم أنه يتخذه خمرا لأن المعصية لا تقوم بعينه بل بعد تغيره. وقيل يكره لإعانته على المعصية على كراهية التنزيه. وهو الذي تطمئن إليه النفوس. وفي ضميمة الروضة من المجتبى وجامع الرموز ورد المحتار: ويجب على الإمام أن يبعث سرية إلى دار الحرب كل سنة مرة أو مرتين إلى قوله وهذا إذا غلب ظنه أنه يكافيئهم وإلا فلا يباح قتالهم.

وفي الهداية: والمروي عن أبي حنيفة من لزوم البيت محمول على حال عدم الإمام. وفي فتح القدير: وما روى جماعة من الصحابة أنهم قعدوا في الفتنة محمول على أنه لم يكن لهم غناء قدرة. في الدر

المختار باب البغاة: فإن بايع الناس الإمام ولم تنفذ حكمه فيهم لعجزه عن قهرهم لا يصير امام. وفي الباب كثيرة لا تحصى.

Thus, I am not guilty of committing the opposition for which Hadrat is issuing a ruling. At the same time, Hadrat is not issuing any ruling against the difference of opinion which I have. Furthermore, I am not alone in having this difference of opinion. Articles of many 'ulamā' have already been published wherein they express their difference in opinion. Some of them did not publish any articles, but this is also their view. This can be gauged by following it up and undertaking a study of it. In fact, it will not be surprising to see that they will be more in number. Even if they are not more in number, the issue of majority and minority is not the basis for right and wrong. There are many rulings in which Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* is on one side and all the other Imāms are on the opposite side. Despite this, his ruling was not disregarded. There the issue is of one Mujtahid against another Mujtahid. Here it is between a non-Mujtahid and a non-Mujtahid. The "playing field" is therefore level. Moreover, the differences are on certain extraneous issues, not on the fundamental objective. That is, supporting an Islamic government as much as one can with one's wealth and through prayers. Anyway, Hadrat's own special associates differ with him in this regard. In the above mentioned announcement, one question – no. 12 – states: "What is the position with regard to all types of employment for the British?" This is the answer which is quoted from Hadrat: "It is harām."

A person by the name of Hājī Ismā'īl who is a cloth merchant at Rīwārhī Bazaar asked the 'ulamā' of Deoband about teaching Arabic in a government school. The said Madrasah [of Deoband] replied: A job of this nature is still permissible as had been stated previously. However, it is better, preferable and more cautious for all those who are employed by the British to leave their jobs because it is totally unacceptable for us to have any type of relationship with the enemies of Islam. However, in the case of necessity and compulsion, the fatwā of permissibility as had been issued previously still applies today. One should not be critical of and abusive towards those who commit a permissible act. This reply also contains the signatures of Maulānā Muftī 'Azīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib and Maulānā Muhammad Anwar Shāh Sāhib. As for Hadrat's reply

quoted above, it was written before that. His reply is dated Dhū al-Hijjah 1338 A.H. while this fatwā is dated Jumādā al-Ūlā 1340 A.H. That fatwā is quoted here verbatim. Thus, if every difference of opinion is blameworthy, what will be said about the 'ulamā' of Deoband?

Thus, since it has been proven that every difference of opinion is not an opposition, the present fatwā of Hadrat does not even apply to me. Rather, it is with reference to the opposition. Therefore, if anyone has the slightest evil whispering against Hadrat out of love for me, this proof is sufficient to remove that whispering. In fact, I am not even complaining against the questioner for having labelled me as the opposition without verifying the matter first. It may well be that he mistook an unreliable person to be reliable, heard something from him about me, and was not aware of the proofs of my non-opposition. These proofs will be listed shortly. Therefore, I still consider such a person to be excused up to this point. However, if anyone has the desire to have evil thoughts or to make disparaging remarks even after the truth has been made clear to him, I pardon him from my side but he will have to ponder about his answer to Allāh *ta'ālā*. The actual motive of most of those people who publish statements against me is to cut off the confidence which the masses have in me. Their objective is being realized without their efforts by my own actions. Those who come here frequently witness it for themselves. This is why I do not even feel offended in any way, nor do I have any ill feelings towards anyone. Yes, if I do experience such matters from people who used to claim or still claim to have a bond with me, I will certainly experience natural grief for a few days, and this grief too will end once I think about the absence of a bond with them.

Further on, a few proofs are presented to show how wrong it is to accuse me of being the opposition [of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind]. I am doing this so that the actual objective of this article may be supported further – i.e. I am not the one who is intended in Hadrat's statement, so no objection must be made against him. These are the proofs:

(1) The article wherein I explained my creed and views.

(2) The fact that Maulwī Shabbīr Ahmad Sāhib Deobandī asked me: "Bearing in mind that there are differences of opinion on these issues, what must I do?" My reply to him was: "Hadrat is

our senior. You ought to give preference to him over me. As for me, my situation is different. You can verify it from Maulwī S̲āh̲ib." These quoted words may not be exactly as said, there might be some difference in them. Anyway, if I did stop anyone, then the first point to bear in mind is that when it comes to a contentious issue, it is not deemed reprehensible in the Sharīʿah to order or prohibit anyone. Furthermore, my address was not a general one – it is no crime to advise one's special and close associate. Furthermore, I did not stop anyone from the actual objective of supporting an Islamic state as much as one can. Rather, I merely stopped from the evils – whether they be in name or in reality. Who can label such a thing to be opposition?!

(3) The article *as̲-S̲uh̲uf al-Manshūrah fī Fad̲ā'il Iʿānah Angūrah* (*Bāb Targhīb Iʿānat Mālīyyah Angūrah)* and the article *ash-Shukr wa ad-Duʿā' (Bāb Shukr Futūh̲āt Turk wa Duʿā'-e-Futūh̲āt*) were published in *an-Nūr*, vol. 1 and 2. As for supporting and praying [for the Islamic state], that is continuing [to this day]. A list containing a considerable portion of the type of support which was extended has already been published in *an-Nūr*, vol. 2, nos. 3, 4 and 5. The basis of the natural aversion are two; isn't this strange that the one who is supportive is counted as an opposition!? Yes, a gathering was not organized because this would contain certain evils. Whatever help was extended was sent to this address (I am providing the address because some people ask me how I send it). [The addressee is] Janāb H̲ājī Wajīh ad-Dīn S̲āh̲ib, Sadr Bazaar, Meerut.

(4) It is proven from the actions and statements of H̲ad̲rat *rah̲imahullāh* himself that he did not consider me to be an opposition. Consequently, when I went to meet him after his return from Malta, all who were present witnessed with how much attention and affection he received me. So much so, when I got slightly delayed in meeting him after z̲uhr, he said to me: "I was about to come to you." Look at the level of his affection. This happened when he had already learnt about my opinions. Some of my close associates who had accompanied me – and are now in Kānpūr – related to me when we were in Deoband that they said to H̲ad̲rat: "Ashraf is present. It will be good if you touch some of these issues." He replied: "He [referring to H̲ad̲rat Wālā] is considerate of me, so he will not be able to say anything in reply. It will therefore not be

appropriate for me to say anything in such a situation.” From this we learn that H̲ad̲rat was aware of my views, and also did not consider my differing opinion to be opposition in Dīn. Had it been the case, he would not have offered such a light excuse. Thus, his affection towards me despite knowledge of my opinions is clear proof that he did not harbour any thoughts of blameworthy opposition.

(5) This is an addendum to the previous point. In his introduction to his translation [of the Qur'ān], H̲ad̲rat made mention of me in a good manner. The necessary part of it can be seen towards the end of this article under point number two. If he really did have bad thoughts about me, would it not have been necessary to remove this section in order to prevent people from having confusing thoughts about me?

(6) This is also an addendum to the previous point. H̲ad̲rat *rah̲imahullāh* wrote two letters to me – one during his stay in Makkah, and the other on his return from Malta. These have been published in *Dhikr Mah̲mūd*. One may refer to them there.

(7) This is also an addendum to the previous point. H̲ad̲rat replied to a question which was posed to him with regard to myself and H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Khalīl Ah̲mad S̲āh̲ib. Refer to point number three at the end of this article.

(8) The honourable 'ulamā' of Deoband have the closest and most special bond with H̲ad̲rat *rah̲imahullāh*. Had this been H̲ad̲rat's view, why would the 'ulamā' of Deoband speak against it? Refer to points 5, 6 and 7 which are to follow soon.

Maulānā Muh̲ammad 'Alī S̲āh̲ib – the khalīfah of H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Fad̲l ar-Rah̲mān S̲āh̲ib Ganj Murādābādī *quddisa sirruhu* – is attached to the 'ulamā' of Deoband by virtue of his special links with our elders. Although he differs with me on these issues and extends his counsel to me, he refutes some of the rumours made against me. Refer to point number eight which is to follow soon.

(9) The above proofs are obvious external proofs. Now let me quote an internal proof which is a statement of a person well-known by the title of Ishrāqī, and is acknowledged as a man of genuine expositions. It is quoted in a letter of a reliable person together with the chain of transmission. I have it in my possession. It is quoted further on under point number nine.

(10) This is an addendum to the above point. A person cancelled his bayʿah with me because of what he thought were my views. Someone asked [the above-mentioned] Ishrāqī Sāhib about this person [who cancelled the bayʿah]. He responded by explaining what is meant by real participation, labelled the present participation as undignified, and displayed the error of this person. A copy of this letter has also been conveyed to me via the reliable person mentioned above. I have it in my possession as well. Refer to it in point number ten which is to follow.

These are ten proofs which further strengthen the objective of this article. I will now quote the articles and extracts which I have been making reference to in the above article. Coincidentally, they are also ten in number. Thus the proofs and the references are adorned with the blessed number of ten – *tilka ʿasharatun kāmilah* (that totals ten). The ten points follow:

Additional points to the above article

First Point: A letter from Munshī Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Faydābādī – presently residing in Makkah.

"A few months ago, a zealous and immature resident of Sahāranpūr quoted Maulwī Shafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib and made some accusations against you. When I related this to Maulwī Shafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib, he was immensely disturbed by the person's self-motivated lie. How can Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* be displeased with you?! Some worldly people over here say things to people which are in line with their opinions merely for worldly gains and attribute these things to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. I know these people very well. They are from among Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's people but did not acquire Dīn. Maulwī Shafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib always speaks in your praise and values you."

Just as Munshī Sāhib provided the approval of Maulwī Shafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib to prove the fabrication of this narration, the love of Maulānā Muhibb ad-Dīn Sāhib (who is from among the most special associates of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib) is also proof of it. This is gauged from a post card of Maulwī Shams al-Haqq Sāhib, the deputy of Hājī Tehwar ʿAlī Sāhib. He writes: "Hadrat Maulānā Muhibb ad-Dīn used to think of you a lot and conveyed many salāms to you." 15 Muharram 1341 A.H. If –

Allāh forbid – Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was displeased with me, these most special associates of his would not have treated me with so much of affection.

Second Point: A quotation from the introduction to the translation of the Qur'ān of Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib.

"Secondly, several translations of devout 'ulamā' of present times have been published one after the other. From among them, I had the opportunity of studying two of them in detail. The first is the one of Maulwī 'Āshiq Ilāhī Sāhib of Meerut. The second is the one by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Sāhib which, apart from being an excellent and beneficial commentary, is in line with the creed of the pious predecessors and pure from the shortcomings and defects which I made mention of."

Just think! How can a person who is committing an unlawful act be referred to as "devout" and referred to as "Maulānā"? Furthermore, this translation was printed under the supervision of Maulwī Muhammad Mubīn Sāhib and Maulwī 'Azīz Gul, a prisoner in Malta. Both of them are referred to as the special attendants of Hadrat under the title [of the translation]. If Hadrat [Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib] really considered me to be what some people are claiming that he said about me, these two special attendants would have at least attached a footnote to these words ["devout" and "Maulānā"] and said something that would remove all confusion.

Third Point: Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib's reply to a question (details in this regard were provided under the heading: Third Quotation – compiler) with regard to myself and Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib.

"I received your letter and was most astonished. I can never understand how any Muslim who knows these personalities can ever use such words against them as quoted by you. At the same time, I am most astonished at how you could quote those impure and vulgar words, and then plan to publish these answers in the form of a fatwā. Assuming someone uttered some of these words and thereby destroyed his Hereafter…"

"I hope that you will exclude me from such matters in future which I do not even have the courage to hear and whose hearing causes me pain and distress." 6th Dhū al-Qa'dah.

He said in another letter: "The faith and confidence of the masses or its absence are not dependent on agreement with his views. Therefore their faith and confidence or absence of it are both not worthy of consideration."

Bearing in mind the announcement mentioned in the prelude to this article as quoted in *an-Nūr*, vol. 1, no. 10 – where the words "enmity to Islam" and other similar words are used, and words like "impure and vulgar words" and "pain and distress" as mentioned in the above letter, moreover in the above letter the questioner requested publishing the reply in the form of a fatwā, yet Hadrat expressed his disapproval of it, and then instructing for the announcement to be published in a newspaper – does all this not create a doubt that this letter is either not written by Hadrat and someone got it signed – and in most cases when a reliable person presents a letter to be signed, the senior signs it without checking the contents – or if the letter has been written by Hadrat, then someone really inflamed his anger. Some people claim that this letter is abrogated. However, the same can be said about the one who abrogated it, i.e. it is not an evidence without first showing him the original letter. Only after the proof is accepted with all sections of it can it be used as evidence.

The following points can also be considered in this regard:

1. He must have prohibited the questioner from speaking ill of, slandering and backbiting these personalities because these sins are unlawful on all Muslims. If a Muslim backbites these personalities there can be nothing but sin in it.
2. I consider the books which you are seeing of Maulānā [referring to Hadrat Wālā] to be excellent.
3. Where efforts are made to stop Muslims from carrying out even their minor religious activities (like the slaughtering of animals because it is in answer to the questioner's question), then it is harām to give donations for such things. Although it is not expected of our Hindu brethren, if any Hindu stops us from slaughtering a cow, it will be our Shar'ī responsibility to act even more in opposition to him.

Now look to what extent is the abrogator being practised on and to what extent is it harmful to us.

Fourth Point: A reply from Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib, principal of Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband.

This is in reply to a letter: As-salāmu ʻalaykum. I received your letter and learned of your conditions. We certainly differ with Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʻAlī Sāhib on current issues. However, these differences are not of such a nature where we will tolerate belittling Maulānā and being audacious towards him. Whatever Maulwī ….. Sāhib did or said, he did from his side. We never approve of it nor can we permit such a thing. 21 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1339 A.H.

Fifth Point: (Addendum to the previous point)

This is in reply to a question. No one asked me any question with regard to Maulānā Ashraf ʻAlī Sāhib. I certainly do not approve of labelling him a fāsiq. His aloofness from the khilāfat assemblies is due to a valid reason. Siddīq Ahmad, *may Allāh pardon him* (Kāndhlawī).

The statements of the ʻulamā' of Deoband are attached to it.

Our creed with regard to current issues is the same as that laid down by Hadrat Ustād Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. However, based on our noble thoughts about Maulānā Ashraf ʻAlī Sāhib, we always looked for an explanation to the accusations which are made against him. We never labelled him a fāsiq nor did we permit anyone to do this. Written by Muhammad Anwar, *may Allāh pardon him* (head lecturer at Deoband). ʻAzīz ar-Rahmān, Muftī of Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband, 18 Safar 1340 A.H.

أما أنا، فمولانا التهانوي يسئل عني ولا أسأل عنه

Shabbīr Ahmad ʻUthmānī, *may Allāh pardon him.* Faqīr Asghar Husayn, *may Allāh pardon him.*

(This hand-written fatwā is preserved)

The meaning of the above Arabic text is this: I am not of such a rank as to ask about Maulānā Thānwī. However, he is of a rank where he can ask about me [and he can then give his views about me].

If anyone takes some other meaning from this text, he must ask the scholar who wrote it.

Sixth Point: Addendum to the previous point. It is a condensed version of the letter of Maulānā Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib which was attached to the fifth point.

I was extremely disappointed at having to witness such an era where questions of this nature will be posed. Merely thinking of this causes my hairs to stand on their ends. However, this incident is also one of the strange things of this era. I saw the letters of Maulwī …. and was astonished at seeing his two-facedness. At the same time, I was not overly astonished because I did have such thoughts about him and was convinced of them. I am also anguished by his attitude. The entire group [of 'ulamā' of Deoband] shares my opinion.

This letter is also preserved.

Seventh Point: Addendum to the previous point.

This is a verbal reply of Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Sāhib, the attendant and companion of Hadrat [Shaykh al-Hind] in Malta. This took place in a gathering in Thānā Bhawan where the Maulānā, Maulānā Kifāyatullāh Sāhib, Maulānā Ahmad Sa'īd Sāhib and Maulānā Murtadā Hasan Sāhib were also present. All these personalities came personally out of their kindness, and honoured me by their visit and special affections. When they left here and went to Kāndhla, someone asked Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Sāhib about my imāmat. The Maulānā was most unhappy with this question and said: "What a useless and futile question! We consider him [Hadrat Wālā] in the same rank as we consider our other elders." Later he mentioned several things about his noble thoughts about me in a general gathering. I did not quote them out of fear that some words might be inadvertently changed. There are many people who heard his statements in Kāndhla. In fact, he said so much [in praise of me] that some committee members began having bad thoughts about him.

Eighth Point: The statement of Maulānā Muhammad 'Alī Sāhib, khalīfah of Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *quddisa sirruhu*:

"As far as I remember, he did not use any heavy words against you."

15 Safar 1340 A.H.
Khānqāh Rahmānīyyah, Maunger

Ninth Point: A statement of a man of expositions as quoted by a friend in a letter which is preserved by me.

Khān Sāhib said that Ishrāqī Sāhib used to speak very highly of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib and used to say: "He is a very great man. His creed as regards current issues does not stem from fear but is essentially his opinion."

Tenth Point: A letter of the above-mentioned man of expositions.

The one who cancels his bayʿah from a Sufi because the latter does not take part in the khilāfat movement has made a big mistake. Every Sufi is taking a part in the khilāfat movement. But this is difficult to understand by the unqualified ones. Taking a part in the khilāfat movement does not mean that you have to make ostentatious leaders your imāms and to consider Gandhi as the leader of India and accept him as the Mahatma and so on. (The major way of participation is to help financially and make duʿā').

The ten points are now concluded and this article is also concluded.

Ashraf ʿAlī
7 Safar, Friday, 1341 A.H.

Sixth quotation

Admitting that the letter which is attributed to Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib is a fake letter[1]

In the beginning of 1341 A.H. a letter was published in the newspapers from Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Dehlawī, presently residing in Murādābād. The letter was attributed to Hadrat Shaykh al-Muhaddithīn Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh*. Subsequent to that, copies of this letter were published in various places. One of the points contained therein was a question and answer with reference to Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. Although those who are conversant with Hadrat Deobandī's style and just-minded people were immediately convinced that this letter was a fake, as a precaution – a trait which has become second nature to Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat – he [Hadrat Wālā] wrote a comprehensive and conclusive article on this subject. It was

[1] Quoted from *an-Nūr*, Rajab 1344 A.H.

published under the title, *Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt*,[1] in *an-Nūr*, vol. 2, no. 10, dated Safar 1341 A.H.

It was mentioned in that letter that: "Some people feel that this Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib hails from Siyuhārah but – for some reason – claims to be a Dehlawī [resident of Delhi] who is presently residing in Murādābād. However, I am not saying anything in this regard as well. This should also be verified as a precaution." When Maulwī Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Siyuhārwī read this, he wrote a note absolving himself, and sent the note to the office for publishing. This was published in *an-Nūr*, vol. 3, dated Jumādā al-Ūlā 1341 A.H.

It was also stated in *Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt* that the original letter must either be requested from the publishers, or Khalīl ar-Rahmān Dehlawī's address must be obtained and the original letter obtained from him. Once the original is obtained, it must not be accepted as authentic until one of Hadrat Deobandī's special and reliable attendants sees it and testifies that it has in fact been written by Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* or that he heard each and every word of the letter read to him and then signed it.

On seeing this article, some associates undertook an intense search for the original. However, it would only be found if there ever was such a letter. All those who published it were asked for the original but most of them did not even reply to the requests. One of the publishers was Janāb Tasadduq Ahmad Sāhib Sherwānī, the Honorary Administrator of the Majlis Khilāfat for the district of ʿAlīgarh. He was also asked to produce the original. Thereafter, it was demanded from him. Subsequently, he published an announcement in the newspaper, *Zamīndār*, dated 21 December 1922 in a column on page six wherein he wrote: "I have no knowledge about the authenticity or non-authenticity of this letter and its reply. As regards the poster which was published in my name – it was neither published by my approval nor my suggestion. Neither was any permission in this regard sought from me." Refer to *an-Nūr*, no. 3, p. 2, dated Rajab 1341 A.H.

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[1] This article was quoted previously under the Fifth Quotation. (compiler)

After this, neither was any search or investigation made in this regard nor did I receive any information. However, just recently Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat received a letter from Delhi which is dated 9 January 1926. It is quoted here verbatim. The writer identifies himself as Khalīl and says that the letter which was attributed to Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* was published by himself. He also admits that the letter has nothing to do with Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh*, rather, "a certain person published it in my name." He adds: "Prior to this, I considered you to be against him because of certain creedal and national issues." Now just look, on one hand he claims to be a follower of Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* and at the same time he is fabricating a lie against him and deluding the people. Furthermore, this fabrication was concealed for a considerable period of time. And when he does come out into the open, look at how beautifully he does it that there is no address or whereabouts of the writer provided. Would Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* ever tolerated this? Anyone who met Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* even once will spontaneously respond that this is certainly a fabrication. As a poet says:

> These bitter words have been made up by us. It is a slander against this sweet-speaking personality.

The person who observed the mutual agreement and unity between these two personalities [Hadrat Wālā and Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind] will never accept the possibility of opposition between the two. This is why he did not even see the need to express this. However, when he saw the excesses of the ignoramuses crossing all limits, some people expressed their practices. One example of this is the letter which was published in *an-Nūr*, vol. 5, no. 9, 10, dated Muharram and Safar 1344 A.H. under the title *Maktūbāt Husn al-ʿAzīz* in which the writer quoted a statement of Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* in which the Maulwī Sāhib was reprimanded for uttering a word against Hakīm al-Ummat which was certainly against his high rank. It is also mentioned therein that Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said: "How do you know that my view is correct and on the truth, and that Maulānā Thānwī's view is absolutely wrong?" Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* added: "In all those places where you said something against Maulānā Thānwī, you must replace it by

writing something in his praise so that you can make up for your folly."

Just-minded people must decide for themselves the level of bond which existed between Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā [Thānwī], what Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* thought about his own opinions on contentious issues, and to what extent can we believe the claims of extremism which are attributed to Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* with regard to past political movements. A poet says:

You can gauge my splendour from my garden.

Even in this letter the person's full address was not provided. It only referred to him as Dehlawī, residing in Murādābād. The other letter also does not give any address. We are therefore saying via this announcement that if the writer who has requested clearing of ill feelings from Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat wants to be pardoned, then this has already been done from before because Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat had already pardoned all people of this nature in a separate announcement (which was published in Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1339 A.H. and is also referenced in *an-Nūr*, vol. 2, no. 11). As far as we know, the act of pardoning the wrongs of such people even without their requesting it is only to be found in Hadrat [Wālā] in our times. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable his shadow to remain over us for a long time because he is a great favour of Allāh *taʿālā* on us. Āmīn.

If it is the intention of the writer to remove ill feelings from the heart, then this is not the way. Rather, he should provide his full name, address, etc. and himself ask Hadrat [Wālā] to show him the way to obtain his pardon. How can it be that the error is committed in public and the repentance is done in private!?

السر بالسر والعلانية بالعلانية

If the writer wishes to absolve himself from the rights which he owes to fellow humans and wants to save himself from divine punishment which will afflict him in the case of not fulfilling the rights of fellow humans, he will have to accept all the conditions which Hadrat Wālā lays down. Allāh willing, all the conditions will comply to the Sharīʿah. The writer should at least ponder a bit rationally. When Hadrat Wālā accepts a certain personality [Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind] as his senior and

elder, is it a minor crime to claim that he used to say such and such things about you – i.e. he was displeased with you – and then to be proven guilty in this claim? At least take a moment for introspection and think to yourself that if someone were to do this to you, what thoughts will pass through you, and will your heart be cleared merely by receiving one letter? Never! Instead, you will also say: "I have suffered many times because of your wrongs."

There is another point which needs consideration. There are many who destroyed their Dīn by getting involved in backbiting, cursing and criticizing. Can they be rectified just by this one letter? If this impossible task was left like that, all these people will be together with the writer in committing the sin because he was the cause of it. Does Dīn and integrity permit heaps of sin to continue piling while nothing is done to put a stop to this? Just as most people considered the past letter to be the original and felt that its contents were written by Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī despite not having any full address, in the same way, Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat had the right to publish it after considering it to be correct, and be pleased with this request for clearance [of ill feelings]. Let alone this one letter, after the present clamour had subsided, countless letters requesting pardon have already been received, and continue to arrive. Those who come here frequently are fully aware of this fact.

However, Allāh *taʿālā* conferred Hadrat Wālā with the ability to consider the one who praises him and the one who vilifies him to be equal. He is overcome by devotion to Allāh *taʿālā*. This is why the thought did not even cross his mind that he should publish those letters. Although his attendants wanted to publish them, he always stopped them. As for the present letter, one cannot even be convinced about its authenticity and the authenticity of its contents without having Sharʿī proof. Therefore, he would never permit publishing it. However, since he is also a Hakīm al-Ummat, and thousands of people were saving themselves from deception as regards inquiring about the authenticity and non-authenticity of this letter, and there was no way of knowing about it without publishing it and making an announcement that if Khalīl Sāhib Dehlawī comes across this article, then for the sake of integrity, he would cast aside all his assumed wisdoms, disclose his full identity and address, and divulge the reality of this letter. This, so that

many people will be saved from deception, and the writer may be able to absolve himself from the rights of fellow human beings if he wants.

As for those who have fallen into unnecessary criticism and vilification or are doing this at present, if they believe this and still do not repent, it may well be that this letter will inspire them to restrain their tongues. Based on all these advantages and benefits, the publishing of this letter was approved. It is quoted here verbatim. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Copy of the letter

(Delhi…Respected and honourable H̲ad̲rat – as-salāmu ʿalaykum)… In the last few years a letter attributed to H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Deobandī *rah̲imahullāh* was published by myself in *Hummdumm* and other newspapers. I have to say something in this regard. Although I am in total agreement with H̲ad̲rat Maulānā's views and fully support the political movements, I now – for the sake of honesty – consider it essential to admit that the letter – in the manner in which it was arranged – and the answers to certain questions have nothing to do with Maulānā. Rather, a certain person had it published in my name. Prior to this, I considered you to be against him because of certain creedal and national issues. I now hope that your respected self will – for the sake of Allāh and Rasūlullāh – clear your heart towards me and those who published this letter. If you remove all types of ill feelings towards us from your heart, and we come to know of it in some way or the other, then Allāh willing, I will personally come to you at some time in the future and present the actual facts in detail. That is all.

I request your prayers for success in both worlds. I am your obedient one. Attendant of Dīn and the community. Khalīl.

The letter contains a stamp of the Chāndnī Chowk, Delhi, Post Office, dated 8 January 1926.

Copy of the envelope: Thānā Bhawan district Muz̲affar Nagar.

Addressed to: H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muh̲ammad Ashraf ʿAlī S̲āh̲ib

Stamp of the Thānā Bhawan Post Office dated 9 January 1926.

We do not wish to comment on this letter.

Here is another example:

The newspaper *al-Muballigh* of Delhi, vol. 1, no. 7, dated 21 June 1923 contains an article in which a letter is attributed to Hakīm al-Ummat in which he – Allāh forbid – wrote to a friend stating that whatever Islamic support that is being extended to the Turks in the present war must be stopped…The editor of the newspaper claimed that he has the original letter. Since that time to the present day, Maulwī Nūr Muhammad Sāhib, the editor of *Sirāt-e-Mustaqīm*, Hyderabad Deccan, has been asking the editor [of *al-Muballigh*] for the original letter. Subsequently, acting under the suggestion of the Maulwī Sāhib, I personally went to meet the editor [for the original letter] but how could he produce it when no such letter exists?! First of all, you cannot find the editor, and if you do meet him, the letter cannot be found. About three years passed in this procrastination and the letter has not been found. Allāh willing, even if it is searched for until the day of Resurrection, it will not be found. This fabrication is similar to the previous one. The reader can deduce the condition of the second fabrication from the first one. If Allāh *taʿālā* inspires the fabricator to come out with the truth then the present fabrication will be exactly like the previous one in the sense that he would be trying to make up for his folly. (editor – *an-Nūr*)

Seventh quotation

(Note from the compiler of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*: This quotation displays the levels of differences as regards the political movements and their good consequences. The following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* applies:

> All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that the two of us have reconciled. The doe-eyed damsels are dancing and offering goblets and cups.

Glory to Allāh! Look at how the differences of the senior personalities were in line with correct principles and within the boundaries of the Sharīʿah. What broad-mindedness, moderation and justice they possessed! They themselves initiated a reconciliation with Hadrat Wālā. People who have differing views today must take a lesson from their actions.

No sooner these differences were resolved, Hadrat Wālā undertook a peaceful journey to Hyderabad Deccan to which he was invited for the sake of tablīgh.

True wisdom[1]

A poet says:

> O you who have evil thoughts! Give up suspicion and read the Qur'ānic instruction which states: Surely some suspicion is a sin.

I had been hearing various statements attributed to the respected and honourable 'ulamā' of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband about myself. Some of the incidents appeared to be conflicting. During the same period, the respected Principal Sāhib invited me to his daughter's wedding. After I excused myself from attending, the Deputy Principal Sāhib extended an invitation for me to merely come and visit. These personalities acted on the Hadīth which states:

خيرهما الذي يبدأ بالسلام

The better of the two is the one who initiates the salām.

In this way, they surpassed us in the reward. Despite this, I was unable to accede to their requests.

Based on the following instructions:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ

Do not pursue anything of which you have no knowledge.[2]

فَتَبَيَّنُوْا

Then verify it.[3]

I did not believe the different narrations which I was receiving. Thus, in order to remove the whisperings which I was experiencing, I decided to write to these personalities to obtain their views. A reply was received from them and it was published in *an-Nūr*, Ramadān and Shawwāl 1341 A.H. on pages one and two. I then received a third invitation to go and meet them. I replied by excusing myself because I received reports that some personalities had ill-feelings towards me. The

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[1] Quoted from *an-Nūr*, Dhū al-Hijjah 1341 A.H.
[2] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 36.
[3] Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 6.

following are some of the statements which are contained in the reply which I received:

(1) All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, no one has any ill-feelings towards you.

(2) Even if anyone genuinely has any ill-feelings towards you, I would expect your respected self to resolve the issue and save our group from disunity and dissension. If you do not deem it inappropriate, you may come here with a clear and pure mind. And I will return personally with you. If the time to accept my clarification has not arrived as yet, I will come there.

I then provided some details about the narrations. The following are some of the replies to them.

There have always been differences of opinion among the seniors, juniors and those in-between. These differences also caused mutual objections. I myself differed with your respected self with regard to some of the narrators. However – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I never tolerated listening to any denigration and humiliating remarks. In the case where there were differences of opinion on rulings, making objections against them was not considered blameworthy according to the Sharīʿah. First of all, the disputes among the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* should be studied. Based on differences, objections were made not only against senior Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* but also against the ʿAsharah Mubashsharah and even the Khulafā' Rāshidūn. In fact, there were times when harsh words were used. This even led to physical fighting. However, all this was confined to difference of opinion. When it came to personal interaction and relationships, we see the original bond and affinity. Stories of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* on one side, and Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah, Hadrat Talhah and Hadrat Zubayr *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* on the other side are well-known.

Based on a subsidiary ruling, Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* uttered harsh words with reference to Hadrat Zayd ibn Arqam *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. After them, we see the differences which existed among the Mujtahid Imāms and their followers. Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* makes severe objections against Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* and his followers. Yet, when it comes to Imām Abū Hanīfah's personal self, his virtues and merits, then he [Imām Shāfiʿī] displays utmost respect to the

extent that he even leaves out the *qunūt* in the fajr s̲alāh. Similarly, Imām Shāfi'ī *rah̲imahullāh* makes severe objections against his teacher, Imām Mālik *rah̲imahullāh*. We can say as a general rule, that even if the difference is subsidiary and not fundamental, literal and not essential, they use inciting and stirring words in the beginning due to their fervour and zeal. These subsidiary differences sometimes lead to discord and disturbances, but they eventually result in peace. The Ashā'irah and Māturidīyyah are unanimous in principles. Yet, look at the dissension which resulted because of just a few issues, and see how the doors of criticism and defamation opened. This led to disputes and degradation. However, when they eventually reconciled, it was realized that most of the differences were only in words. As for the real and fundamental differences which occurred later on, they resulted in labelling the other as a deviate and sinner. The exact same condition was experienced by us with regard to your respected self.

There were certainly differences, objections were raised, but the same relationship with your self continued. Even if anyone uttered a word while in a state of displeasure, it was warranted for that situation. There was nothing more. The majority of us adopted a way of absolute caution. The approach of most of us was that despite differences on the issue itself, we continued defending you. For example, an article was written about Maulwī H̲usayn Ah̲mad S̲āh̲ib. Yet, his relationship with you remained as it always had been. He continued giving replies to the objectors on your behalf even though it earned him their wrath. My purpose of saying all this is that during these times of so intense emotions, fervour and differences of opinion if anyone said anything which besmirches your rank, it must be known that we are unanimous in principle. If there are any differences, they are only on the basis of Dīnī expediences – each one acted on what he considered to be preferable. Thus, I feel that we should not involve ourselves in too much of investigation and enquiry. Rather, the principles should be borne in mind and the temporary differences removed.

To sum up, I must say that many narrations and incidents were not conveyed in their original condition. There is no doubt that this resulted in differences which led to complaints, grievances and then objections. However, these objections were not antagonistic or obstinate. Rather, they are as happens most of the time between two groups which are on the truth.

Most of the differences were based on whether we should act on concessions or not. In such a situation, despite our differences, our Dīnī relations remained the same and continue to remain the same. Many things have been wrongfully attributed to certain elders, or especially certain juniors regarding whom your respected self has certain thoughts. The fact of the matter is that whatever was attributed to a person became attached to him [irrespective of whether he really said it or not]. And this does not apply to any particular side. I can frankly claim that our relations were never severed. I hope that you will not pay attention to those stories, and you will accept my humble plea to come here.

That is all. Was salām.
Habīb ar-Rahmān.
Deoband, 12 Dhū al-Hijjah 1341 A.H.

I replied by saying that I conclude by accepting your statements, and pose two questions:

1. If the other group viewed Hadrat Deobandī *rahimahullāh* in exactly the same manner, can it also benefit from this excuse?

2. If these political activities are successful according to your hopes, will the same kindness and affection be extended to me from the beginning.

I received the following reply:

1. Based on their differences of opinion, both groups made objections against each other, no one denigrated and disparaged the other. Neither was this the intention of anyone. Thus, both are equal in this regard. If any one group is to be excused, both will have to be excused. If one is not, both will not. There is no need to differentiate between the two.

2. If all our hopes are realized, then I can honestly say that I will extend the offer even more persistently…

Habīb ar-Rahmān
16 Dhū al-Hijjah 1341 A.H., Saturday.

After this, I saw no reason to refuse. I proceeded to Deoband on Wednesday, spent the whole of Thursday in meeting all my associates and friends, and thoroughly enjoyed it. This enjoyment was concluded on Thursday night with a lecture which I was requested to deliver (it is titled *Ādāb at-Tablīgh* and

has already been printed). The joys of this occasion and the time when this occurred is portrayed in the following couplet:

عيد وعيد وعيد صِرن مجتمعه – وجه الحبيب (إشارة إلى اسم حضرت الداعي) وشهر العيد (ذي الحجة) والجمعه (ليلة الوعظ)

Three ʿīds were celebrated collectively. The joy of seeing Habīb (the principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband who had invited Hadrat Wālā), the month of ʿīd (Dhū al-Hijjah) and Friday (the night on which the lecture was delivered).

The joy of this reconciliation brought with it the joy of another reconciliation. That is, while this correspondence was continuing, I received a letter from a relative in which he mentioned: "Today, the Turks have signed an agreement with their adversaries." The joys of these two reconciliations were supplemented by a third smaller reconciliation. That is, in this village [Thānah Bhawan] a group of Muslims was at loggerheads with another group. The two groups unanimously agreed to reconcile on the day on which I received the last letter. This natural "light" turned the other two "lights" into a multitude of lights. I conclude this section with a couplet which makes reference to the conglomeration of these joys and "lights".

سرور في سرور في سرور – ونور فوق نور فوق نور

A joy followed by another joy, followed by another joy. A light above one light, above another light.

19 Dhū al-Hijjah 1341 A.H., Friday
Ashraf ʿAlī.

Eighth quotation

The Muslims' approach to disputes with non-Muslims[1]

Question:

What do the 'ulamā' say about the following issue: India is presently ruled by a foreign non-Muslim power. The inhabitants in this country are Muslims and non-Muslims. The non-Muslim inhabitants have formed their own national political assembly in which some Muslims have joined. They

[1] Quoted from *an-Nūr*, vol. 10, no. 11, Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1349 A.H.

have adopted the following measures in order to obtain freedom from the foreign power.

1. Laws of the government must be broken even though the laws may be permissible in themselves. In other words, accepting them does not necessitate casting aside an obligatory duty or committing a harām. If the government is strict in this regard, we must neither defend ourselves, neither by going into battle nor by giving up breaking the laws. This must be done even if it sometimes leads to destruction, whereas one can abstain from breaking the law for the sake of preserving his life.

2. All interaction with the government must be severed. In other words, one must not be employed by it even if the employment is permissible, and no matter how much poverty one has to experience in the case of not being able to resort to other means of earning. Furthermore, one must not study in educational centres and institutes of the government even if the education is permissible in itself. That country's trade goods (especially cloth) must not be purchased.

3. Guards must be stationed outside businesses which stock these goods so that they could stop anyone wanting to purchase these items. They can resort to whatever measures to stop them. They must first request them verbally. If they do not pay heed, the guards must block their way. If they have purchased the items already, they must be compelled to return them even if the businessman does not accept the goods happily. In the same way, the businessmen must be stopped from trading in such goods. If they do not pay heed, different measures may be adopted to cause them harm and to threaten them. These measures must be adopted even if the trader does not have any other means of income, and even if the closure of his business results in him and his family dying out of hunger.

4. When the party's leaders are apprehended or other steps taken against them, businesses must be forced to lock up even if closing them causes the trader to suffer poverty. Anyone who does not join in these boycotts and measures which are mentioned in points 2, 3 and 4 must be harmed to the extent of even assaulting and beating him.

5. The help of women must be obtained to carry out the above mentioned measures even if the women are not in

purdah, are young and have beautified themselves. In other words, they must be made to sit as guards at the shops, walk around the streets [as guards], stop people from supporting those businesses, encourage them to boycott, and so on. In order for them to do all this, they must intermingle, interact and converse with strange men without any reservation; they may hold hands to form blockades and stop buyers. This would obviously result in women getting effected either by the overpowering of modesty or the overpowering of lust. As for the temptation of the eyes and heart, there is no doubt about it. Sometimes this goes further and results in immoral acts.

6. Some of those who are arrested for committing the above actions undergo hunger strikes to the extent of losing their lives. They are then praised by the public.

7. Meetings are held periodically, processions are taken out and inflammatory speeches are delivered. Sometimes young unmarried women also deliver speeches. Un-Islamic poems are rendered and music is also played.

8. The objective of these activities – as stated by the party itself – is to establish a government in which the majority element will be non-Muslim while the minority element will be Muslim. However, in reality, this minority element will only be in name. The fundamental objective is for this non-Muslim party to take control whereby the salient features of Islam and the Muslims will be wiped out either in person or as a religion. The manifesto of this party, its activities, interactions, incidents, speeches and writings are sufficient testimony to this. A short time passed when this non-Muslim party took a resolution for the Muslim masses to take part in the fight for freedom, to accept their help and support through which the Muslims' religious and national interests and rights will be preserved to a certain extent.

Consequently, the Muslims were, to a certain extent, satisfied with this resolution. However, later on, as per the directive of the party's other purely religious and national high assembly, this resolution was cancelled. First of all, this action enables us to gauge the intention and objective of this non-Muslim party. That is, it wants to keep the Muslims subjugated under its influence. This danger now becomes certain that there will be constant interference in the religious and national affairs of Muslims in contravention of the Islamic Sharī'ah. An example

of this is to be found in the Sarda Act which is in vogue since quite some time. Secondly, bearing in mind that this non-Muslim party broke its covenant, the Muslims cannot rely on its promises in the future.

9. The one who is at the forefront of laying down these plans, teaching them and promulgating them is a non-Muslim who is only concerned about the interests of his own people and is not bothered about the Muslims in the least. For example, his personal admission to put a stop to the slaughtering of cows has been established. This is mentioned in the newspapers. Despite this, some Muslims are so die-hard followers and lovers of this non-Muslim that they accept anything that he says and are prepared to provide Qur'ānic verses and Ah̲ādīth in support of his statements. They relate his positives with real fervour and zeal, and eagerly wear a topī in emulation of him.

10. In order to strengthen this non-Muslim party, some of its members invite Muslims to join them. Others are so proud over their strength or display it – for whatever reason – in such a way that they do not even turn their attention to the Muslims. Despite this, some Muslims – although very few in number – go to them. Subsequently, some of these Muslims follow them both internally and outwardly. Others may claim their independence verbally, but join them for all practical reasons.

This is a brief description of the situation and incidents. Detailed observations can be learnt from the newspapers. I now have the following questions in respect to the above incidents.

(a) Are the above-described actions permissible according to the Sharīʿah? Is it permissible for Muslims to commit them? Especially when it means having to follow a non-Muslim party, when it entails strengthening unbelief and weakening Islam. This can be gauged from points numbered 8, 9 and 10.

(b) If the prohibited actions are mixed with a few permissible actions, will the prohibited actions become permissible, or will the combination of permissible and impermissible actions render all actions impermissible?

(c) If a government is made up of Muslims and non-Muslims, will it be an Islamic government or an un-Islamic one? This is especially when it is established through definitive evidences

that the objectives of this government will always be political expediencies, and when there is a conflict between the latter and religion, political expediencies will be given preference. Religion will be – so to speak – cast aside or, distorted with a view to applying it to these expediencies. In fact, the type of Muslims who will be able to participate in such a government will almost certainly give preference to political expediencies over religion. A recent example of this is the government of Amānullāh Khān. What consideration to Islam can one then expect from non-Muslims?

Is striving for such a government – which is made up of Muslims and non-Muslims, and that too, Muslims who are as described above – considered to be a jihād? After all, the Shar'ī objective of jihād is to elevate the word of Allāh *ta'ālā* and strengthen Dīn. Although we have an un-Islamic government even now, is there any difference in the two situations in the sense that the present un-Islamic government did not come into existence by our choice while the other will be by our choice. Furthermore, the present un-Islamic government is not causing any wilful harm to religion, while the other – which will be a collective government in name, but un-Islamic in reality – will wittingly cause harm and damage to Islam. There are proofs and testimonies in this regard which are published in the newspapers on a daily basis.

(d) If an 'ālim or a group of 'ulamā' issued a fatwā of permissibility for the above actions or agreed to them – whether for corrupt reasons or with sincerity on the basis of judgemental error and ignorance of the reality – or it restricted the fatwā to the lawful actions, but it is known with certainty that the restrictions will never be adhered to or the impermissible actions will certainly be committed either because of an absence of system among the Muslims or absence of influence on the part of 'ulamā' – whatever the case may be, if someone issued such a fatwā and, at the same time, there are many 'ulamā' who do not concur with it, will it be obligatory on all Muslims to act on the fatwā or only those who have faith in the ones who issued it? If a group of 'ulamā' – whether many or the majority of them (although this is not the case here) agree on a course of action, will it be considered to be an ijmā' whose opposition will be unlawful?

(e) If a person does not join in these measures after considering them to be against the Sharīʿah, will it be permissible to criticize and castigate him, malign him, or to go one step further by causing him monetary or physical harm, as has already happened in many places?

Questioner: Miyā Mu<u>h</u>ammad ʿAlawī, Kirānah.

<u>Answer</u>

(a)

These actions are not permissible in the Sharīʿah. It is not permissible for Muslims to commit such actions. This is more so when the objective is as described in the question. In such a case, there will be a combination of two evils, the actual evil itself and its objective. I will therefore write on each one separately.

(1) Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلَا تُلْقُوْا بِاَيْدِيْكُمْ اِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ

Do not throw yourselves into destruction.[1]

If a situation permits acting on this rule – as mentioned in the question – and yet it is broken, then the consequence of breaking it is obviously destruction.

(2) Sometimes severing of ties could lead to leaving out an obligatory duty. For example, a person has no means of income apart from a lawful employment or engaging in a specific type of business. In order for him to fulfil the rights of his wife and family, it is obligatory on him to earn a living. Thus, severing ties of this nature will essentially result in leaving out an obligatory duty. It is a sin to leave out an obligatory duty. If the severing of ties does not entail leaving out an obligation, but entails enmity towards the government – and it is not permissible for a weak person to antagonize a powerful person without any Sharʿī need because this would also entail falling into sin – the prohibition of which is mentioned in the verse under point number one. This will only apply when the severing of ties is not considered to be a Sharʿī obligation and others are not compelled to do it. If it is considered to be a Sharʿī obligation, it will be an affirmation of:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 195.

يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَّوَاضِعِهِ

They twist words from their contexts.

To compel someone is an act of oppression whose impermissibility is clearly obvious.

(3) This also entails many evils. (a) Compelling a person to abstain from a permissible action. Apart from certain specific forms of trade, it is permissible to engage in trade with even the Ahl al-Harb. It is even more permissible with those with whom Muslims have entered into a covenant. The *Sharh as-Siyar al-Kabīr*, vol. 3 states:

باب ما يكره إدخاله دار الحرب إلا أنه لا بأس بذلك في الطعام والثياب ونحو ذلك لما روي أن ثمامة بن أثال الحنفي أسلم في زمن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقطع الميرة من أهل مكة وكانوا يمتارون ههنا، فكتبوا إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يسألونه أن يأذن له في حمل الطعام إليهم، فأذن له في ذلك وأهل مكة يومئذ كانوا حربا لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. فعرفنا أنه لا بأس بذلك إلى قوله إلا الكراء والسبي والسلاح.

(b) The second evil is that when a transaction is complete, it is a sin to compel a person to return the item which he bought. Without the rule of "right of return", the Sharīʿah considers this returning to be similar to a transaction, and for this there has to be mutual agreement between the buyer and seller. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَأْكُلُوْا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُوْنَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ.

O believers! Do not devour the wealth of each other among yourselves wrongfully unless it be a transaction by mutual consent.[1]

(c) The third evil is that of harming those who do not pay heed. This is absolute oppression. (d) Causing harm to one's wife and family. This is also oppression. (e) If it is claimed to be a Sharʿī obligation then it would entail distorting and altering the Sharīʿah; and its detestability was mentioned in the previous point.

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 29.

(4) This also involves the same evils as mentioned in the previous point. If a person is physically harmed for not participating, then this sin is more severe than causing monetary harm, and totally negates the demands of Islam.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده، والمؤمن من أمنه الناس على دمائهم وأموالهم (جمع الفوائد للترمذي والنسائي، وله وللبخاري وأبي داؤد بدل والمؤمن إلى آخره والمهاجر الخ)

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe. A believer is one whom people trust as regards their life and wealth.

These tyrants who force people to sever ties are even acting against their own accepted principle of freedom. After all, what is the reason for striving for your own freedom while snatching away the freedom of others?

(5) This is totally against the clear texts which prohibit adultery and the preludes to adultery. It applies especially more to the announcement which is included in the general nature of this verse:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ تَشِيْعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ.

Those who like to spread slanders of immoral conduct among the believers – for them is a painful punishment in this world and in the Hereafter.[1]

(6) This is obviously suicide which is harām.

قال الله تعالى: وَلَا تَقْتُلُوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ. وفي الهداية، كتاب الإكراه، فيأثم كما في حالة المخمصة إلى قوله فكان إباحة لا رخصة الخ. وفي العناية: فامتناعه عن التناول كامتناعه عن تناول الطعام الحلال حتى تلفت تفسه أو عضوه فكان آثما...الخ.

We learn from this that his life could have been saved. Not eating and giving his life is a sin. Leave aside the sin of abstaining from lawful food, there is the fear of unbelief for praising such an action because it entails an explicit rejection of the Sharī'ah in the sense that he is praising an action which the Sharī'ah considers despicable.

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[1] Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 19.

(7) Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قال الله تعالى: وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ اَنْ اِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا، فَلَا تَقْعُدُوْا مَعَهُمْ حَتّٰى يَخُوْضُوْا فِيْ حَدِيْثٍ غَيْرِهِ اِنَّكُمْ اِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ.

The order has already been revealed to you in the Qur'ān that when you hear the verses of Allāh being rejected and ridiculed, you should not sit with them until they become immersed in some other conversation. If not, you will also be like them.[1]

It is explicitly learnt from this verse that it is a clear sin to participate in gatherings, processions and marches where speeches which do not comply with the Sharīʿah are delivered, and where the laws of the Sharīʿah are openly violated. The sin will be even more serious when these actions are looked at with approval and others are also encouraged to take part.

(8) The detestability of this is obvious. To make efforts for its success entails an open support for sin or unbelief. The impermissibility of this is explicitly mentioned:

وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى الْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

Do not help each other in sin and oppression.[2]

(9) Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آثِمًا اَوْ كَفُوْرًا

Do not obey any sinner or unbelieving person from among them.[3]

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا بِطَانَةً مِّنْ دُوْنِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُوْنَكُمْ خَبَالاً ط وَدُّوْا مَا عَنِتُّمْ ج قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَآءُ مِنْ اَفْوَاهِهِمْ صلى وَمَا تُخْفِيْ صُدُوْرُهُمْ اَكْبَرُ ط قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ. هٰاَنْتُمْ أُولَآءِ تُحِبُّوْنَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّوْنَكُمْ.

O believers! Do not take anyone as a confidant other than your own [people]. They spare no effort in ruining you. They yearn for you to remain in as much suffering. Enmity emanates from their mouths, and whatever is concealed in their hearts is much worse than that. We have expounded the signs to you, if you

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 140.
[2] Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 2.
[3] Sūrah ad-Dahr, 76: 24.

have intelligence. Listen! You people are friends to them and they are not your friends.[1]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إذا مدح الفاسق غضب الرب تعالى واهتز له العرش. (رواه البيهقي في شعب الإيمان-مشكوة).

When a flagrant sinner is praised, Allāh taʿālā becomes angry and His Throne shakes violently.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلَا تَرْكَنُوْا اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ

Do not incline towards the wrongdoers or else the Hell-fire will afflict you.[2]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من تشبه بقوم فهو منهم (رواه أحمد وأبو داؤد–مشكوة)

The one who imitates a people is part of them.

These verses and Ahādīth demonstrate the detestability and sin of the points mentioned here.

(10)

في شرح السير الكبير باب الإستعانة بأهل الشرك واستعانة المشركين بالمسلمين، ج٣، ما نصه: ولا بأس بأن يستعين المسلمون بأهل الشرك على أهل الشرك إذا كان حكم الإسلام هو (....) إلى أن قال: والذي روى أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم رأى كتيبة حسناء قال من هؤلاء، فقيل يهود بني فلان حلفاء ابن أبي، فقال إنا لا نستعين بمن ليس على ديننا. تأويله أنهم كانوا أهل منعة وكانوا لا يقاتلون تحت راية رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، وعندنا إذا كانوا بهذه الصفة فإنه يكره الإستعانة لهم إلى قوله وإنما كره ذلك لأنه كان معه سبع مائة من يهود بني قينقاع من حلفائه فخشي أن يكونوا على المسلمين إن أحسوا بهم ذلة قدم فلهذا ردهم، وفيه بعد ذلك حديث الزبير حين كان عند النجاشي فنزل به عدوه فأبلي يومئذ مع النجاشي بلاء حسنا، إلى قوله إن النجاشي كان مسلما، وبعد أسطر، قلنا ان ظهر على النجاشي لم يعرف من حقنا مكان النجاشي يعرف فأخلصنا الدعاء إلى أن مكن الله النجاشي ...ملخصا.

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 118-119.
[2] Sūrah Hūd, 11: 113.

The crux of the above is that the prerequisite for joining the unbelievers where there is no Sharʿī prohibition is that they must be subservient to us. If this is not the case or both parties are equal in power and action, then it is not permissible to join them. The reason is also mentioned in the above narration. That is, if they enjoy independent power and Muslims were to join them, and their opposition is overwhelmed by virtue of this collective power, they will be able to overpower the Muslims. If anyone acted contrary to this prerequisite, e.g. when the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* supported Najāshī against one of his enemies, the reason for it is that either Najāshī had become a Muslim by then, or that the Muslims needed some protection at the time, and Najāshī was of more benefit to them than his enemy. This is why the above prerequisite did not apply. This is the crux of the above narration.

After reflecting on the reality of this incident, its ruling becomes clear from this narration. That is, if the Muslims join this non-Muslim party which wants freedom, they are certainly not subservient to the Muslims. The Muslims will either be subservient to them – and this is the more likely scenario – or the two will be equal. Although this possibility is very weak, even if this is the case, the prerequisite for the permissibility of participation – i.e. the Muslims must be in control – is not found. Therefore the basis for permissibility is also not found. As for the permissibility which is mentioned in the narration which does not permit participation – i.e. they will use the Muslims to realize their objectives and then try to overpower the Muslims – this danger is certain. This is the answer to question (a). I now present the remaining answers.

(b)

The jurists unanimously agree on this principle:

ما اجتمع الحلال والحرام إلا وقد غلب الحرام

The combination of the lawful and the unlawful is most certainly unlawful.

This is also a rational issue. In fact, if we look specifically at the permissible side and it becomes a means for an impermissible objective, then based on the principle:

مقدمة الحرام حرام

The prelude to an unlawful is also unlawful.

The permissible side itself becomes impermissible. From this, we learn the answer to the question that when the permissible is joined [to the impermissible], the sum total will not be permissible. And in some cases, the permissible itself will not remain permissible.

(c)

Based on the principle mentioned in the previous point, a government of this nature will be un-Islamic especially seeing that it will have those dangers as mentioned in the question. How, then, can striving for such a government be a jihād?! Who can ever refer to it as fighting for the word of Allāh to reign supreme and for the strengthening of Dīn.

في جمع الفوائد: سئل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم عن الرجل يقاتل شجاعة، ويقاتل حمية (للقوم أو الوطن مثلا)، ويقاتل رياء، أي ذلك في سبيل الله. فقال: من قاتل لتكون كلمة الله هي العلياء فهو في سبيل الله. (للستة إلا مالكا)

The two types of government which were very clearly explained in the question and the difference in ruling which was asked is now clear. In my answer to point number ten, the story of Najāshī was related. It is based on the same difference. It is also on the basis of this distinguishing attribute that Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* based a fatwā of his. It is quoted below.

Since ancient times, it has been the practice and rule of Christians not to interfere and oppose any other sect or religion. They also do not interfere in any religious freedom. They maintain their subjects under every type of peace and security. Therefore, it is permissible for Muslims to live here in India and be the subjects of these Christians who have taken control of India. When the idolaters of Makkah imposed hardships and difficulties on the Muslims, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* sent some of them to Abyssinia which was under the control of Christians. The only reason

this was done was that they used to abstain from interfering in any religion.[1]

وتقييد الفتوى بالمذهب والرعية أخرج إضرار بعضهم من ليس على ملتهم في البلاد، والشاسعة فما هو من أهل الحكومة ليس في الملة، وما هو في الملة ليس من أهل الحكومة.

This differentiation is supported by another ruling which is both rational and Sharʿī. That is, when there is harm in both options, but one harm is worse than the other, the lesser harm will be tolerated in order to save oneself from the greater harm or to repulse it.

كما قالوا: من ابتلي ببليتين فليختر أهونهما، وقال النووي في شرح مسلم في حديث بريرة ما نصه: والثانية والعشرون احتمال أخف المفسدتين لدفع أعظمها واحتمال مفسدة يسيرة لتحصيل مصلحة عظيمة على ما بيناه في تأويل شرط الولاء لهم.

(d)

A fatwā of this nature is not an evidence against everyone. It is permissible for each person to act on the fatwā of the ʿālim in whom he has faith. In fact, after observing the situation as mentioned in these questions, I would say that it would be a boon if even an explanation is given to the opinion of those who issue the fatwā of permissibility of participation. For example, by saying that their intention is possibly good and they did not look at its harms. But there is no way it can be referred to as ijmāʿ.

في نور الأنوار: وأهل الإجماع من كان مجتهدا صالحا الخ. والشرط إجتماع الكل وخلاف الواحد مانع كخلاف الأكثر. وانظر إلى بعض أقوال بعض المجتهدين خالفوا فيها الجم الغفير من العلماء ولم يطعن فيهم بمخالفة الإجماع، ومبناه مانعية خلاف الواحد.

(e)

Even if there was an equal possibility of right and wrong on both sides, to consider one side to be right and denigrate the other side for choosing the other view on a matter which is based on ijtihād is an attestation of the verse:

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[1] Quoted from *Rū'edād Jalsah 52*, Madrasah Maẕāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr, 25 March 1917.

وَمَنْ يَّتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَ اللهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ

Whoever transgresses the limits of Allāh has certainly wronged his self.[1]

Anyway, after looking at the answers here, the side of impermissibility is preferred. Thus, to harbour any evil thoughts or to malign those who do not participate is far more unjustified – no one has such a right.

Allāh *taʿālā* knows best. His knowledge is most perfect and most absolute.

Ashraf ʿAlī, 10th Muharram 1349 A.H.

Notes:

1. Prior to this, I was asked on two occasions about a statement which was attributed to me and published without my knowledge. On the first occasion, the statement did not even contain any reference. A reference was then provided on the second occasion. Now on the third occasion, independent questions were posed. Bearing in mind that answers can always change with the change in conditions and situations – and this can happen in the future as well – the answers were given differently on all three occasions although there is no contradiction in the meanings. One should not feel that there is a real difference in the answers. If there is any apparent contradiction, it is because of the questions.

2. The above article was a reply to specific questions. The answers are in response to the incidents. Since I do not have any reliable means for verifying the incidents, I took the precaution of adopting a procedure which a Dīnī group adopted in respect of a Dīnī centre of learning. The procedure follows with slight changes: The ʿulamā' and also leaders of the community have divergent views and opinions. Each group is presenting incidents to the country in line with its knowledge and investigation or its objectives. Conditions are changing swiftly with the changing incidents. In such a case, it is difficult to give a view in line with the Sharīʿah while examining a specific case or incident. This is why, as long as there was no Sharʿī need to give an absolute ruling on political issues,

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[1] Sūrah at-Talāq, 65: 1.

observing silence was considered to be the most prudent thing to do.

The collective creed of this centre of learning – to put it in a few words – is and has always been that it never lagged behind in proclaiming the truth, nor did it allow flattery and tumultuousness to dictate to it. Just as this group does not approve of insurrection, it also does not succumb to any pressure for concealing the truth. This has always been its "party-policy" for which it cannot and was never held responsible for any personal action. 4th Dhū al-Hijjah 1348 A.H. 14 Muharram 1349 A.H.

3. Bearing in mind that this article has become considerably long, as is my practice, I give it the title *Muʿāmalatul Muslimīn fī Mujādalati Ghayr al-Muslimīn*.

Ashraf ʿAlī.

Ninth quotation

A short recollection of Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib[1]

Note 23: It is either due to my shortcoming or lack of dedication that I had very few occasions of corresponding with Hadrat *rahimahullāh*. Even the few occasions when I did write to him and received formal replies from him, particular attention was not paid to preserving those letters. At present, I recall three letters which were preserved. One was with regard to a matter related to tafsīr. The reply was published in *Fatāwā Imdādīyyah*, vol. 4, p. 336. One may refer to it there. The other two are not of very significant importance. I am quoting them below as a source of blessing. These two letters are not in any way less important to serve as equitable witnesses to prove Hadrat's humility and affection.

> An embodiment of virtue and perfection. May Allāh *taʿālā* honour you and place you above most people.
>
> As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh
>
> I experienced the urge to enquire about your wellbeing on several occasions and also learnt about

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[1] Quoted from *Dhikr Mahmūd* which is a concise biography of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* written by Hadrat Wālā.

it verbally from people who came to visit me. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain you and all your associates on goodness. Presently I met a Bengali brother, ʿAbd al-Majīd, who is returning to India and intends visiting you.

I considered it to be an excellent opportunity to send this letter with him. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this servant and all his companions are very well and experiencing absolute peace. I came to Makkah Muʿazzamah in the beginning of Rajab and I am still here. I hope you will not forget to pray for the success and good death of this distant and miserable fellow. I cannot say anything about my future plans of where I am going to be staying. Kindly convey my salām to Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib, Maulwī Muhammad Zafar Sāhib, Maulwī ʿAbdullāh Sāhib and others.

I am most saddened by the demise of Maulānā Maulwī Muhammad Yahyā Sāhib and Maulānā Qamar ad-Dīn Sāhib. To Allāh we belong. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His blessings on them. Peace to you and to those who are with you.

That is all.
This servant, Mahmūd, *may Allāh pardon him.*

Makkah Muʿazzamah
12 Muharram, Wednesday.

Convey my salām to Munshī Rafīq Ahmad Sāhib. May Allāh *taʿālā* give progress to his periodical.

A treasure house of virtues and blessings. May your shadow remain eternal.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

Your letter brought immense joy and gratitude to me. Whatever we are enjoying is a result of the prayers of respected and sincere people. May Allāh *taʿālā* perpetuate their blessings.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, all my companions, associates and myself are well. Convey salām to all.

Peace to you and to those who are with you.

That is all.
This servant, Mahmūd, *may Allāh pardon him.*
Deoband.
2nd Shawwāl, Sunday.

An example of Hadrat's impartiality, defence of the truth and concern for Dīn can be gauged from the following incident. The chief of a town and an 'ālim who was of our thinking held a function to which I was invited, and so was Hadrat Maulānā and several other seniors. On reaching there, I gauged that no innovative customs were followed. And why should there be when the host himself was against innovations. However, an invitation had been extended to the entire tribe. I, based on my previous experience, considered this to be a custom of trying to outdo each other and one family showing off to the other. Those of our seniors who were overpowered by good thoughts were a bit lenient in this regard [but I was not]. Consequently, based on our different approaches to the issue, I returned home without participating in the function while the other seniors participated in it.

There was quite an uproar among our own circles as regards my action. When someone asked me about our differences on the issue, I replied while giving full consideration to the respect which our seniors deserved. But the strange thing is that when Hadrat Maulānā was asked about it, then despite having no need whatsoever to show any consideration to my views, he gave a reply which accorded full consideration to my views. It is worth pondering over. He said: "The fact of the matter is that we do not have the knowledge which he [referring to myself] has with regard to the evils which are prevalent among the masses. This is why he exercised caution. As the Persian saying goes: If I were to give my life for just this one point, it would be a worthy cause. Hadrat Maulānā's reply was related to me by some reliable people.

There is another story which portrays Hadrat's impartiality, defence of the truth and consideration. I will conclude *Dhikr Mahmūd* with it. When Hadrat Maulānā returned from Malta, he expressed certain specific views to a few special associates on some very specific issues. He took a personal part in them because it was done solely out of sincerity and as a service to Islam and Muslims. The issues were independent judgements

and open to interpretations. There is therefore a leeway for differences. Some aspects certainly contained elements of worldly and religious dangers and had to be abstained from according to the Sharī'ah.

Bearing in mind these dangers and harms, some 'ulamā' did not participate in these movements. I myself agreed with those who were of the view of non-participation. Many of those who went to extremes in their love, considered our non-participation to be a direct opposition to Hadrat. But look at Hadrat's own response to the situation. When I went to Deoband, I was accompanied by a friend from A'zam Garh who was also a student of Hadrat. He related to me: "I said to Hadrat: 'Ashraf is presently here in Deoband. If you were to discuss these issues with him, he will probably change his views and agree with your views.' Hadrat replied: 'No. That would be most improper. It is most inappropriate to discuss such issues with a person who respects me. Moreover, a person's views and opinions do not change through a mere discussion. They change through incidents and events." Allāhu Akbar! Look at his level of impartiality and consideration.

On the same subject, a person was present in Deoband when some people were complaining about me. Hadrat gave them a hearing and said: "I am most saddened that you are complaining to me about a person when I consider him to be …" (Hadrat Maulānā used some very laudable words which are far beyond my rank, and I am therefore not mentioning them here). He also said: "Do you think that whatever I am doing I am doing after receiving divine revelation? I have a certain view and he [referring to me] has his own unique view. Why should there be any objections and complaints about this?"

Some people wanted to bring Hadrat to Thānā Bhawan in order to strengthen these movements. When they forwarded their request to him, he replied: "He [referring to me] is present there. He will be discomforted if I were to go there. If I were to agree with him, I will be going against my own views. And he would be embarrassed by my disagreement. I will therefore not go there."[1]

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[1] He said on one occasion: "Why do you people constantly complain about him? He is also rendering services to the Dīn."

Glory to Allāh! Allāh is the greatest! I address other groups by mentioning these excellent qualities of my elders and seniors to them. I then say to them:

أولئك آبائي فجئني بمثلهم – إذا جمعتنا يا جرير المجامع

O Jarīr! When you bring us together in large assemblies, then present to us people as great as my forefathers.

Tenth quotation

The gist of all matters related to the political movements

Three friends were on a journey when they came to a spot where a lion was facing off a few wolves. Their path was completely blocked off. The three had no weapons of any sort, but there were a few bricks which were lying in front of them. All three differed with each other on what course of action to follow. One of them felt it would be best to help the lion. If the lion was victorious, it would naturally be impressed by his act of kindness and will not attack him. He will then be able to continue safely on his journey. Having thought this to himself, he began striking the wolves with the bricks. The second person thought to himself that the lion is one, while there are several wolves. They would probably defeat the lion. If he were to help the wolves, they would naturally be impressed by his act of kindness and will not attack him. He will then be able to continue safely on his journey. After thinking over this, he began striking the lion with the bricks. The third felt that the bricks were neither sufficient to defend the lion nor the wolves. In such a situation, if the one whom he helped was defeated, he would have made an enemy of the victorious party. Even if the one whom he helped was victorious, an animal is after an animal. Its natural instincts overpower its intelligence. There is no guarantee that it would be impressed by his help and show consideration to him. In fact, it may consider it an ideal opportunity to attack him as well. Therefore, as long as he does not have sufficient weapons for his own defence, it would be best for him to abstain from helping either of the two parties. Instead, he must try to protect himself as much as he can. Thereafter, no matter which of the two is victorious, his abstention from interfering in their affairs would prompt the victorious one not to interfere with him. Even if he was attacked, he would not regret having interfered in their affair and antagonized it. The third man therefore separated himself

from the other two and began making preparations for his own protection. Somehow or the other, he managed to slink away silently from their range, took a long winding path and came back onto the path which he had been travelling on. As luck would have it, the lions and wolves reached there as well.

These are three separate ways which the three chose for themselves. If they did not break any rational laws and each one does not taint his intention, no rational blame can be made against any one of them. if any one of them is shown through a genuine proof that the approach which he chose is going to be harmful, he does not have any sensible answer to it, and he still insists on following his course of action, he will certainly be blameworthy. This is the similitude of certain specific matters and views. And Allāh knows best. As a poet says:

> When there is a conflict between two tyrants, you must hasten to make preparations for your own safety.

27 Shaʿbān 1351 A.H., Monday.

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From the above quotations the reader must have gauged fully well the extent to which Hadrat Wālā's creed vis-à-vis political movements and activities was based on Dīnī and worldly wisdoms and prudence. The essence of it was that in the present circumstances, movements of this nature are neither in line with the Sharīʿah nor in accordance with prudence. The question which then comes up is that what course of action should be followed for the betterment of Muslims? To this end, Hadrat Wālā compiled a most beneficial book titled *Hayāt al-Muslimīn*. He bore immense hardship to prepare this book in a simple and comprehensive manner. He did not bear as much hardship for any of his other written works. This book became widely accepted, was published by many organizations and translated into several languages. This will be gauged from the section titled "The Attention Which Scholars Paid to Hadrat Wālā's Written Works" which is to follow his list of books further on in this biography. This book can be purchased from bookshops. Hadrat Wālā then penned an entire course of action for *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* and published it under the title *Siyānatul Muslimīn ʿan Khiyānati Ghayr al-Muslimīn* (protecting Muslims from the treachery of non-Muslims). It is now left to

others to adopt this course of action or reject it. This course of action is quoted here verbatim. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire Muslims to derive benefit from it.

Siyānatul Muslimīn 'An Khiyānati Ghayr al-Muslimīn[1]

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم المؤمن القوي خير من المؤمن الضعيف، وفي كل خير. الحديث رواه مسلم.

Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu ʿanhu *narrates that Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam *said: A strong believer is better than a weak believer, but there is good in each of them.*

The Muslims of India who are experiencing hardships at present have two lawful courses of action. One is for the weak ones. They must resort to absolute silence. They must neither make any preparations for their protection nor pay any attention to defence. The other is for the strong ones. They must plan for protection and defence for themselves and for their Muslim brethren. Just as the permissibility of both courses are gauged from the above Hadīth, the desirability of the second course is also learnt. The source of protection is confined to two things. One is Dīn, and this is the fundamental source. The second is the virtue of their own protection together with the virtue of protecting Dīn as is proven from the following Hadīth:

ومن قتل دون ماله فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون دمه فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون دينه فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون أهله فهو شهيد. (جمع الفوائد عن أصحاب السنن)

The one who is killed while defending his wealth is a martyr. The one who is killed while defending his life is a martyr. The one who is killed while defending his religion is a martyr. The one who is killed while defending his family is a martyr.

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[1] In other words, providing Muslims with means which are lawful according to the Sharīʿah and the law which would protect them from a deceitful non-Muslim nation which is causing harm to Muslims or is to cause harm to them in the future. This article is quoted from *an-Nūr*, Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1349 A.H.

It is proven through experience that the protection of the majority of individuals, the general protection of others, and those who protect one's worldly matters are generally dependent on a collective force and on an organized agreement. This is why protection would demand collectiveness, unity and organization. These qualities are virtually non-existent in our brothers. This is why every Muslim is looking at his self and worried over his weakness. On the other hand, the Sufi masters cannot even have any worry about those who are on the truth. If there is any organization in name, it has nothing but worldly motives. In fact, most of them consider Dīn to be an obstacle to their motives and therefore turn away from it wittingly. During these times of helplessness, Allāh's mercy showed the way by casting – in the hearts of some of His servants - the need for an organization and a practical course of action through which the Dīn can fundamentally be safeguarded and worldly matters sequentially.

Some of us – servants of Islam – established a committee for the sake of this organization. Since every action requires an established injunction of the Sharīʿah, we acquired a Sharʿī fatwā for its clauses from Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. It is quoted below. There is a general need for it everywhere so it is being published for the benefit of other Muslims. If – due to regional needs - any lawful additions or subtractions are made to it, there will be no objection to this.

Question:

What do the ʿulamā' of Dīn say with regard to present day Muslims of India who are suffering from worries and there is a danger of them suffering even more in the future? In order to protect themselves and others, a group intends establishing a committee whose clauses are as follows. The question is whether these clauses are against the pure Sharīʿah or not. If any clause is against the Sharīʿah, it must be changed so that it comes in line with the Sharīʿah. The clauses are:

1. To work strictly in accordance with the injunctions of the Sharīʿah. We are excused from acting on those which are not within our capability.

2. These injunctions must be conveyed to others and they must be invited to adhere to them.

3. The following are specific injunctions which have a special role in the desired protection. To remain steadfast on Islam. Study Dīn and teach it to others. To read the Qur'ān and teach it to others. To maintain love for Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* on the level of infatuation. To believe in predestination and place one's trust in Allāh *taʿālā*. To supplicate to Allāh *taʿālā*. To be in the company of the pious. To read or listen to the books containing the biographies of those of the pious elders who have departed from this world. To read or listen to stories about the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. To be especially considerate of the rights of Muslims and to fulfil them. To fulfil the rights of one's own life. This includes not fighting against the rulers. Rather, they must be informed of one's difficulties in a cultured manner. If arrangements which are unsuitable to a person are made, he must exercise patience. If any opponent makes any advances, they must be defended through the rulers. They will then take steps to curtail the enemy or permit you to exact revenge.

One of the rights of the body includes personal exercise. The art of self defence must be learnt while remaining within the law. To be strict in the performance of salāh. To construct masājid wherever they are needed. To engage in the excessive dhikr of Allāh *taʿālā*. To pay zakāh. To spend in other good works. To fast. To perform hajj. If wealth and courage permits, the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* must also be visited. If anyone stops one from doing any of these things, the course of action which must be followed must be as described above on the rights of one's own life. To make arrangements for one's income and expenditure. To increase one's progeny through marriage. To abstain from becoming attached to the world. To save one's self from sins. To be patient and grateful. Patience includes bearing material and physical discomfort wherever the Sharīʿah orders us. To seek advice in matters which need advice. To maintain mutual love, fellow-feeling and harmony. To maintain national distinction. In other words, one's clothing, appearance, manners of speech, interactions and so on must be different from those who are not on our religion. (These actions are detailed in *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* which is worth reading).

4. I feel that the course of action is that a group – no matter how small it is – must establish a committee wherever it

can, start practising on these injunctions and make efforts to promote them among others.

5. In order to make matters easy, a name must also be given to this committee, e.g. Siyānatul Muslimīn (Protection of Muslims) or any other similar name. A few members must also be appointed who will not receive any compensation for their services.

6. These members will be of three categories: (1) The executive. These are the people who must – as a precondition – be consulted for every single work of the committee. It is not a prerequisite for them to be paid from public contributions. (2) The assistants. This will be the name of those who are paid from the contributions. (3) The workers. This will be the name of those who are neither advisors nor assistants. Rather, they dedicate their services to the committee without any compensation. Whatever services are delegated to them by the committee is carried out by them with the intention of reward from Allāh *ta'ālā*. The relationship of these members is a formal one. The fourth comprises of well-wishers who pray [for the committee's success]. If they have any suitable opinion to make, they will convey it to the committee. Their relationship is not a formal one.

7. A chairman must be selected from the executive committee. His selection must be through a unanimous decision of the other members of the executive.

8. The executive committee must not have too many members. Each place must have such a number whose getting together for a meeting is easy. They could be local people or from outside, however, when there is a need, they must be able to meet easily. There is no limit to the numbers for the other categories.

9. The establishment of a new executive must, as a precondition, be approved by the old executive. It is essential for the executive to accept the services of the remaining categories unless there is a Shar'ī obstacle, in which case, it will be deferred to their opinion.

10. A single person can take on two responsibilities and be included in both categories.

11. No person will be able to request inclusion in the executive. Rather, the members of the executive will themselves request him to join them. Requests can be made for inclusion among the helpers and workers. To this end, the person will be given a form in which he will note his name, address and promise of service. The executive can decide on the nature of the form. These forms will be filed safely by the committee. The fourth category – the well-wishers – can request membership and requests can be made to them. But these will be verbal. Even if no special request is made by anyone, a general request can be extended to all Muslims to support the committee with their good advice and prayers.

12. Just as the appointment of the chairman and executive committee was through the unanimous decision of the executive, his or their removal will also be through the unanimous decision of the executive.

13. The resignation of the chairman or an executive member does not need any approval from anyone. However, it will be an act of kindness if the executive is informed of the resignation two weeks before hand.

14. Except for immediate tasks, no work will be done without consultation.

15. The presence of the chairman and three members of the executive is sufficient for a consultation. If the chairman cannot be present, he must appoint another member of the executive to take his place. If the chairman is out on a journey, the executive members can appoint a chairman from among themselves.

16. If there is a difference of opinion among the executives, the opinion of the side in which the chairman is will be considered. This is irrespective of whether this side is in the majority or not. If there is difference of opinion between the chairman and the executive committee, the side of caution must be given preference. In other words, if a disputed issue is absolutely beneficial, having no possibility of any danger in the view of one party, while the other view is neither beneficial nor harmful, preference will be given to the one which is beneficial and that course of action will be followed. If one view contains harm, while the other is beneficial but unnecessary, preference will be given to the one with harm and the course of action will

be abandoned. If one opinion is harmful and the other is beneficial and necessary, and the difference is only on what is more important and more pressing, then preference will be given to the view of the chairman.

17. Neither must anything be done against the Sharī'ah nor must any opinion which is against the Sharī'ah be accepted. If there is any doubt about the permissibility or impermissibility of a matter, a fatwā must be sought from the 'ulamā'. If there are differences on the choice of a muftī or there are differences in the fatwās of the 'ulamā', the fatwā of the muftī who is chosen by the chairman will be followed. However, an executive member who is not convinced with the fatwā will not be compelled to act on it. He will be permitted to remain silent and abstain from participation, but there will be no permission to debate the issue. Similarly, the committee will not do anything which is against the law [of the country].

18. No one will be compelled to join the committee. In fact, it is preferable not to even encourage anyone. However, if it is felt prudent to encourage in a certain place, it can be done provided the encouragement does not go to the extent of imposing on the addressee and making him feel compelled. Only the specific and general aims and objectives of the committee must be presented. A person who joins voluntarily or after lawful encouragement will be allowed to join.

19. A few sincere propagators should be appointed on behalf of the committee. They will promote the injunctions of the Sharī'ah and more specifically, the injunctions which are mentioned in point number three. The propagation will be as a general address. Non-Muslims will also be encouraged and invited to embrace Islam. There will be no debating and arguing with anyone. If a person himself requests a debate, he must be referred to those who are occupied in the debating field.

20. A few sound minded and intelligent people should be appointed on behalf of the committee as volunteers. Their job will neither be propagation nor any specific address. Rather, they will carry out tasks such as reminding – with love and affection – those who are unmindful and negligent of salāh. If they see a person doing something against the Sharī'ah or intending to do something like that, e.g. committing an immoral act, drinking alcohol or gambling, they must remind

him of the warnings of the Sharīʿah in a soft and kind manner. If he does not pay heed, it would not be appropriate for them to impose on him either with severity and harshness or by begging him. When an advisor does not have a formal government, then in most cases it is harmful for him to resort to such measures.

Similarly, if the volunteer notices someone wronging another, e.g. a person is engaged in a lawful buying or selling transaction, and a person comes and forces him not to get engaged in that transaction, the volunteer must help the wronged person. However, his help must be restricted to mere defence. He must not exact any revenge from the oppressor.

The services of a volunteer include the following: carrying the burden of a needy person on the road, helping a person to climb into his conveyance, providing water to a thirsty person, giving directions to a person who has lost his way, reconciling between two people who are having an argument. When helping a wronged or needy person, the volunteer must not distinguish between a person who is belonging to his religion and one who is not. He must help everyone.

The following are the prerequisites for volunteer work: The person must be a Muslim, he must be sane, he must have reached the age of maturity, he must be a male, he must not be a student irrespective of whether he is studying secular knowledge or Islamic knowledge, he must not be a subject of anyone nor employed by anyone.

21. It will be good if the propagators and volunteers have some distinguishing signs on them.

22. The propagators and volunteers will all be under the chairman. They cannot do anything without his permission.

23. The volunteers will inform the chairman or whomever he appoints in his place of their activities. They will report to him daily. The propagators will do the same monthly. They will obtain appropriate orders for the future. The executive members must have a meeting at least once a month where they will discuss essential matters.

24. Arrangements to obtain contributions and donations must be made to help the propagators and volunteers financially. However, it is obligatory to observe the limits of the

Sharīʿah in this regard. If the contributions are small, the work must be done on a small level. Physical training may be taught to volunteers who have an interest in this.

25. If such members join the committee who can make arrangements to have the businesses of Muslims opened, the committee must include this service among its obligations.

26. If such members join the committee who can present the problems of the Muslims or request the fulfilment of their rights in a cultured manner before the government, then the committee should also include this service among its obligations.

27. The activities of the committee together with its financial accounts must be published periodically [in the form of a report].

28. The report must include the general activities. Certain specifics should especially be conveyed verbally to the rulers via those who have contacts with the rulers. This must be done so an opposition may not find an opportunity to create suspicions.

29. The central base of this committee will be Delhi. The residents of other places have the choice of establishing their own independent committees or branches of the central committee. In the case where a branch is being established, verbal consultations must be held between the centre and the branches in order to delineate mutual relationships, rights and conditions.

30. Beneficial books and other literature will be purchased periodically according to need and based on the finances, and kept by the committee. This will be done under the auspices of the propagation department. Specific times will be given wherein the general Muslim public may come and read this literature. If the funds permit, books of this nature may be printed or purchased, and distributed among the Muslims. However, no newspaper will be bought from the capital of the committee. If a newspaper owner sends newspapers for free, or executive committee members or non-executive committee members purchase newspapers with their own money and give them to the committee or study them by themselves, and make use of them when they meet to discuss events, they will be permitted to do this. However, in every condition, they are

advised not to take any steps merely because they are mentioned in the newspaper without permission from the Sharīʿah.

31. Since there will be a need to record all activities, it is essential to appoint an intelligent and suitable secretary. He will be supervised by the chairman or whoever else is appointed by the chairman for this task. The office will also need premises. The same premises could also be used for the formulation of the committee.

Note: This committee is purely a religious committee. It has nothing to do with politics – neither in defence of anyone nor in opposition to anyone. For subjects to ask for their lawful rights from the rulers while remaining within the limits of the law does not fall under the purview of politics. For example, an application for a lawful job cannot be referred to as politics.

Answer

All these clauses are in total conformity with the Sharīʿah and therefore do not even need proofs. However, since the need for this is based on ijtihād, if a person – while believing the above to be good – is not too keen to adopt them, and he considers it safer for himself to remain aloof, and prefers the way which I adopted for myself as mentioned in point number two in the article *Muʿāmalatul Muslimīn*, the committee must not insist on him to take part. Anyway, clause number 18 of the committee itself clearly mentions this. I now conclude this answer with the following supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ هٰذِهِ الْجَمَاعَةَ صِيَانَةً وَحِمَايَةً لِلْمُسْلِمِيْنَ، عَنْ كُلِّ خِيَانَةٍ وَنِكَايَةٍ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ.

O Allāh! Make this party a means of protection and defence for the Muslims against every act of treachery and offence from the non-Muslims.

Written by Ashraf ʿAlī
24 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1349 A.H.

Note: The investigation to this point was based on proofs from the Sharīʿah. There are many explicit dreams which were seen by righteous people in support of this investigation. These have been published periodically in *an-Nūr* and are also to be found in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. The reader may refer to them. Just one

dream from the unpublished part of *as-Sidq ar-Ru'yā* is quoted here as additional support.

Janāb Maulānā Muhammad Hasan Sāhib Amritsarī is an extremely righteous and reliable ʿālim and a senior Sufi master. He wrote to Hadrat Wālā with regard to a dream which he saw in 1340 A.H. Related to this dream, he also saw Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* and Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *quddisa sirruhu* leaving a masjid. The two had their heads lowered towards each other, they were speaking privately and saying while referring to Hadrat Wālā: "His view with regard to the khilāfat movement is most correct."

After this, one of them went back into the masjid and the other departed.

Conclusion

At the time when these political movements were quite rife, such baseless accusations were made against Hadrat Wālā and the opponents were so hell-bent against him that had it not been for Allāh's protection and support from the unseen, we do not know what it would have led to. Hadrat Wālā always remained patient and forbearing, and displayed manly steadfastness on the straight path. There are countless incidents of opposition but Hadrat Wālā prohibited me from relating them because someone may feel offended. He asked me to quote the following couplets and conclude this discussion.

> I related only some of the grief of my heart to you because I fear you will become distressed. There are many more things which I could say.
>
> To speak [excessively] is against the rules of dervishes. Had this not been the case, I had many stories to relate to you.

Many of Hadrat Wālā's opponents made deceitful and fraudulent accusations against him during the political upheavals. However, once their fervour and zeal subsided, they asked him for pardon with absolute humility and remorse. Hadrat Wālā pardoned them. In fact, he made an announcement of general pardon. As for special relationships and purity of the heart, he frankly stated that these were not within his control.

When anyone asked him as to how the purity of the heart could be achieved, he said: "Announce and publish your error." However, he did not compel anyone to change his view. Instead, he clearly said: "When making the announcement, you must state that your view is still the same, you are only retracting from the wrong accusations which you made and expressing your remorse. This is sufficient for the purification of the heart."

Glory to Allāh! Look at how broad-minded Hadrat Wālā is and how he maintains every single point within its limits. Some people did exactly as Hadrat Wālā suggested. In fact, Hadrat Wālā altered the rough copy [of the announcement] of some people in a way that would not cause humiliation to the person. After making the announcement, the person's contact and bond with Hadrat Wālā was re-established as it been in the past. In this way, Hadrat Wālā practised on the order of Allāh *taʿālā*:

فَاصْفَحِ الصَّفْحَ الْجَمِيْلَ

So pardon [them] – a gracious pardon.[1]

He became a manifestation of this couplet:

> This is something which only you could do. Only true men can do this.

Attention To Rectification Of The Ummah

From a study of the past chapters, it must have become crystal clear to the reader that Allāh *taʿālā* created Hadrat Wālā solely for the most important service of rectifying the ummah and reviving the Muslim community. By the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā fulfilled this so beautifully and is still doing it that he is generally given the title of Hakīm al-Ummah and Mujaddid al-Millah from Allāh's side. I recall the affirmation of Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh* in this regard. Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib 'Uthmānī who pledged bayʿah to the Maulānā sent a note to me in which he wrote: "When Hadrat Sayyidī Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* sees any writing wherein Hadrat [Wālā's] name is mentioned, and the words Hakīm al-Ummah

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[1] Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 85.

are not added to it, he would become extremely displeased and say: 'When Allāh *taʿālā* has placed a title in the hearts of people for him, it should not be left out because it is a mark of disrespect to Hadrat.' (Or he said something similar)."

Since almost all of Hadrat Wālā's life was spent in rectification of the ummah and is still being spent in this, let alone not being able to relate all incidents in this regard, it is difficult to write even one tenth of them. However, as per the words of a poet:

> If all the water of the river cannot be drawn, at least that much which can quench the thirst should be tasted.

Some incidents and conditions have already been related in this biography according to the need. At this point, two specific articles are presented to the reader. The first is the introduction of Hadrat Wālā himself which he wrote to his book *Islāh Inqilāb Ummat* in which he pens such a comprehensive course for the rectification of the ummah that if it is acted on, the rectification of every level of the ummah can be realized with absolute ease.

From among the countless other beneficial academic teachings of Hadrat Wālā, this article will present a beneficial and useful example of Hadrat Wālā's academic concern for the rectification of the ummah.

In the second article, the reader will come across a few examples of practical attention to rectification. These were penned by Janāb Maulwī ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Gumthalwī upon my request. It contains ten incidents of Hadrat Wālā's specific efforts in the field of rectification of the ummah. This article is given the title *Makārim ʿAsharah* because of its metaphysical aptness to this chapter on virtues, and also because of its concurrence with the compiler's name (the words *Karīm* and *Makārim* are derived from the same Arabic root word). After this essential prelude, the two articles are quoted in sequence.

Introduction to Islāh Inqilāb Ummat

An ummatī – on the basis that he is an ummatī – cannot focus on a worldly change. Although I do not consider a discussion on this subject to be useless, it is not the purpose of my discussion. Rather, my objective is to discuss a Dīnī change.

This is what I want to present. Very sadly I have to say that the extent of change which has taken place in most sections of the ummah causes the following couplet to come spontaneously on my tongue:

> O you who are resting in Madīnah! Get up because there is corruption everywhere – in the East and the West.

The extent of upheaval can be gauged as follows: Pick up a book in which detailed injunctions of the Sharīʿah are mentioned. Look at each injunction and apply it to an ummatī who does not obey the injunctions of the Sharīʿah. Continue doing this from one side and you will be astonished to note that the person does not have any affinity with any of the injunctions. The following are the parts of Dīn:

1. Aqā'id – beliefs.
2. Diyānāt - religious obligations such as s̲alāh, fasting, divorce, marriage, etc.
3. Muʿāmalāt - dealings such as buying and selling.
4. Muʿāsharat - social etiquette such as eating, clothing, speaking, greeting, etc.
5. Akhlāq bāt̲inah - internal characteristics such as ostentation, sincerity, pride, humility and so on.

When it comes to beliefs, we can say that at least the change has not caused rejection [or apostasy] in Muslims, although some changes have taken place in their religiosity which has caused them to enter into bidʿah. It is this very bidʿah which has caused the followers of falsehood to create opposition towards those who are on the truth because of the latter's efforts to rectify the situation in this regard. In other words, the texts have not been rejected, but baseless explanations have been provided. This is the condition of general Muslims. However, there are certain modern-educated "Muslims" who have opted for rejection. In fact, they went one step further by mocking at and ridiculing the beliefs of the general body of Muslims. The upholders of the limits of Dīn have issued a fatwā of kufr against them. These so called Muslims in return have labelled them [the ʿulamā'] fanatics. A person who understands the reality of kufr will not only excuse the ʿulamā'

from issuing such a fatwā but will feel compelled to agree with them. This is the type of change as regards beliefs.

We now come to the next part, i.e. religious obligations. Here, the general Muslims did not make any changes and alterations to the extent of bidʿah, but have certainly discarded and disregarded these obligations. Some people discarded salāh and fasting as though they are not even compulsory on them. When it comes to marriage and divorce, a person believes that the injunctions related to them are part of Dīn, and not based on his opinions and choices, and are as explained by the ʿulamā'. This is why other injunctions have not been concocted in opposition to the injunctions of Dīn. However, his practice in this regard is that no sooner he is overcome by his desires, he will not even wait for marriage to derive his pleasures. Where he sees the slightest worldly esteem which has to be maintained, he will keep his wife in his house although he has already divorced her, he will continue deriving pleasure from her and make children from her. As for the modern educated ones, they do not hesitate in rejecting these injunctions as well. Anyway, when it comes to the general Muslims, the upheaval which occurred as regards the first part [beliefs] was one of change, while in the second part [religious obligations] it was one of discard and disregard.

We now come to the next three parts, viz. muʿāmalāt, muʿāsharat and akhlāq. The upheaval which took place here is more than the first two. The general Muslims – due to their ignorance – did not consider them to be part of Dīn. Rather, they felt they were worldly matters which could be practised according to their views and opinions. Since the objections were baseless and their views were distorted, this resulted in a new custom and practice being fabricated for each and every injunction of the Sharīʿah. This medley was made the practice, and they never considered themselves to be wrong or erroneous in their practices. Instead, they went to the extreme of considering some of the matters to be their virtue and pride. Consequently, a person who observes the entire condition collectively feels as if someone has wittingly invented a self-concocted injunction in opposition to each of the injunctions of the Sharīʿah after considering his concocted injunction to be good. An indication that he considers his self-concocted injunction to be good is that anyone who calls towards the

adoption of the true injunctions [of the Sharīʿah] is severely maligned and opposed.

This in reality is a major disruption because the disruptions in the first two parts did not remove parts of Dīn from the Dīn. Furthermore, other matters were not considered to be good in comparison to these two, although in the first one changes as regards religiosity had taken place and in the second they were discarded, and that too while believing in one's shortcomings. On the other hand, when it comes to the latter three parts, parts of Dīn were removed from Dīn, other injunctions were concocted for them, and the concocted injunctions were given preference over the original injunctions. Thus, it becomes clear that the disruption in the latter three parts is worse than in the first two, is more obvious and more in number. Although disruptions and changes did take place in beliefs, it is not glaring. As for religious obligations, the disruption becomes apparent at certain specific times and occasions. The disruption is therefore not more in practice [in the first two]. As for the latter three, it is more obvious, more in number and it is a major disruption in practice. Based on this, observers will notice a major disruption in most members of the ummah all the time. A person who sees this major disruption all the time and also hears this claim: "I am a follower of Muhammad", will be severely astonished and think to himself: "O Allāh! In which matter is this person in agreement with Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* that he can make such a claim?"

O Muslims! You must have certainly come to your senses about your condition. If you have not, then to Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. If you have realized your error, is it not necessary to rectify the situation? If it is, when will your rectification commence? Are you waiting for any of the following: a preoccupation which comes as an obstacle, illness, death or some new revelation? You cannot hope for new revelation, and the others cannot be ruled out.

Now in what discourse after this will they believe?[1]

[1] Sūrah al-Mursalāt, 77: 50.

In fact, death is certain. But will you be able to do anything at the time of death?

O Muslims! The upheaval which is occurring in our times was predicted by Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

الناس كإبل مائةٍ لا تجد فيها راحلةً

People will be like camels. From 100 you will not find a single one which would be worthy of riding.

As for the era of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam,* it was one of goodness.

Method of rectifying the disruption

It ought to be known that this disruption is a spiritual ailment. There are specific causes for physical ailments, and their rectification and treatment are accomplished by the removal of those causes. In the same way, this spiritual ailment (disruption) has specific causes, and the only way to treat and rectify it is by removing the causes. It now depends on focusing our attention to just two things: (1) identifying the causes, (2) arrangements for their removal.

Identifying the causes: After pondering, deliberating and pursuing the issue, two causes come up as the most major ones. (1) Ignorance and lack of knowledge. (2) A shortage or absence of determination and intent. Through the first cause essential and intrinsic injunctions remain concealed. Through the second cause, there is no practice and action despite having the knowledge.

Arrangements for the removal of the causes. This is a major issue which really needs absolute focus and a united force. Both causes require separate measures for their removal. The removal of ignorance needs teachers and students, i.e. ʿulamā’ and those who need to know the injunctions. A separate course of action is needed for each one. The course of action for those who need to know the injunctions is that those who are free, e.g. the wealthy and affluent, must free their children for the study of Islamic sciences. Although there is no harm in learning the language of the country and contemporary sciences for the fulfilment of worldly needs, these must always be kept on a secondary level. The children will be rectified in this way. As for the person himself, he must set aside a time

when he will go to an ʿālim or a proficient student, or call either of the two to him and learn the Arabic sciences if he has affinity with them because these are more enlightening means. If not, he must study the essential and beneficial Urdu books after consulting with a senior scholar. He must study each book three times or at least once as though he is studying lessons from a text book. He must then read it a few times so that he becomes proficient with it. These books must contain sufficient material on all aspects of Dīn – beliefs, religious obligations, dealings, social etiquette and internal characteristics.

A person who does not have sufficient time due to his preoccupation with earning a living but can read or learn to read easily, then he and his children – instead of learning Arabic – must learn the same Urdu books as though they are students and the books are textbooks. The books must be read several times. If they come across any difficulty or confusion, they must not resort to their own views. Instead, mark off that section and inquire from an expert when the latter is found.

As for those who cannot read, cannot learn to read easily and cannot even free their children for this purpose – for whatever reason – must set aside a day in the week especially for classes. They must appoint an ʿālim or any learned person who has remained in the company of the pious who understands these books thoroughly. It will be better if they get an ʿālim to suggest such a person for them. On the specified day, everyone must assemble in the masjid or wherever else they have agreed on, and have the learned person to read from those books to them for a specified period of time (either one hour or half hour) and to explain to them. If they cannot obtain such a person for free, they must make arrangements to pay him. If this person comes across anything which he does not understand, he must mark it with a pencil and leave that section for the time being. When he meets an ʿālim, he must get him to explain that section to him and then convey it to the rest of the people. If there is no such person [who can read and explain to them] in a village or other place, the people must make a collection in a manner which is approved by the Sharīʿah, call a person from outside their village who will then teach them. Two points must be adhered to in all of the above sections of people – whether they are studying, reading or listening to the books read to them.

(1) When they come across any matter in their personal lives whose ruling they do not know, they must refer it immediately to the ʿulamāʾ. If they cannot ask them verbally because they are far away, they must do it by writing to them. If they enquire about one ruling daily – whether verbally or by writing – they would learn more than 350 rulings in a year, and more than 3 500 in ten years. Some new ʿulamāʾ or those who are ʿulamāʾ in name do not even know this many rulings. This is not a very difficult task.

(2) They must make it a point of attending the assemblies of the ʿulamāʾ whether they are special assemblies – where they go to meet them – or general assemblies where the ʿulamāʾ are delivering talks and lectures. They must listen to everything with their hearts.

All the above arrangements are for men.

We now come to the women. The above arrangements collectively can be objectionable for women. The easiest method for them is that if a chaste and religious female teacher can be obtained, she must be made to teach young girls how to read the Qurʾān and other books. Allāh willing, the ten parts of *Bahishtī Zewar* are certainly enough for them. In fact, if the eleventh part, *Bahishtī Gauhar*, is added for the men, it will suffice them as well. If such a female teacher cannot be obtained, or a girl has the time and affinity to be included in the programme of mature women, she may be included. There are two arrangements for this. (1) If a man of the house is literate, a time must be set aside daily wherein all the women of the house will assemble and he will read the previously mentioned books to them. In fact, he must read them several times to them. (2) A righteous ʿālim who adheres to the Sunnah must be brought to the house periodically and he must address the women. This is a very effective method.

All the above arrangements apply to those who are in need of learning the injunctions. We now come to the course of action for ʿulamāʾ. The gist of it is that they must make periodic efforts to convey the rules and regulations to those who do not know. This could be done as follows:

(1) Teaching. Preference must be given to the essential sciences. As far as possible, the student must first complete everything related to religious obligations. Even if a student

wants to study a concise book or an Urdu book, and he has the time to teach him, he must never consider it below him to teach the student such a book. He must warn a student when he poses useless questions and abstain from answering them.

(2) Delivering lectures. These are general lectures, and the need of the time must be considered. He must speak about matters which people are involved in or on essentials which they are neglecting. If there are other subjects which he wants to speak about, these must be left on a secondary level and must be few. As for the essential themes, these must cover all aspects. He must not restrict himself to beliefs and religious obligations. Instead, he must also speak on dealings, social etiquette and morals in considerable detail. In fact, bearing in mind that these last three have been discarded, they have now become more important. When delivering a talk, he must speak clearly so that his audience can understand him properly. However, he must abstain from a "holier than thou" attitude and from inflaming the emotions. He must not accept any recompense for his talk. It is another matter if he is employed as a lecturer.

(3) Replying to questions. This could be done verbally or in writing. The 'ālim must consider the following points in this regard. As far as possible, he must not be hesitant in his reply. He must not reply to futile questions. Instead, he must draw the attention of the questioner to his futility. If a question has two possibilities, he must not reply to both possibilities. Instead, he must first establish and identify the actual situation from the questioner and then give an answer. Sometimes, the questioner will listen to the answers for both possibilities, consider one of them to his benefit, and then make claims for that. This results in the questioner's or his adversary's harm either in his worldly life or his Dīnī matters. Do not be too particular about providing proofs to an uneducated person because in most cases it will be beyond his comprehension. Yes, it is a good practice to make reference to a proof or quote a text without translating it for other 'ulamā' who are checking the answer.

If it is gauged from circumstances that the questioner will not understand the answer properly or will err in understanding it, then after writing the answer to him, add a note instructing him to refer it to an 'ālim who will explain it to him verbally. If it is gauged from circumstances that a question has been

posed out of obstinacy, do not answer it. In short, do not hold back from those who are eligible and do not pay heed to those who are not.

(4) Writing. Whether it is an announcement, a newspaper article, a booklet or a book, take consideration of the need of the time, and let it be flowing and adequate. If Allāh *taʿālā* has provided you with some other form of income, then do not become personally involved in the sale of your written works.

The discussion to this point was about ways of removing ignorance. We now come to explaining ways of removing the absence of courage.

It is established from experience that the following have a special influence and impact in strengthening one's resolve and courage. One is to remain in the company of Sufi masters. The following are signs of a Sufi master:

1. He must have knowledge of Dīn to the extent of necessity.
2. He must adhere to the Sharīʿah in his beliefs, actions and character.
3. He must not have any greed for the world.
4. He must not claim excellence because this is also included in worldly motives.
5. He must have spent some time in the company of a Sufi master.
6. The just and equitable ʿulamā' and Sufi masters of his time have a high regard for him.
7. More intelligent and religious people, as opposed to the masses, are inclined towards him.
8. The majority of those who have pledged bayʿah to him are in a relatively good condition as regards following the Sharīʿah and a decreased desire for the world.
9. The shaykh is affectionate towards his disciples when it comes to teaching and tutoring them.
10. When he sees any evil in them or hears about it, he reprimands them. He does not allow them to do as they wish.

11. By sitting in his company a few times, a person experiences a decrease in his love for this world and an increase in love for Allāh *taʿālā*.
12. The shaykh himself engages in dhikr and other spiritual practices, because there is no blessing in one's instruction and teaching if it is not accompanied by personal practice or resolution to practise.
13. Expositions, the performance of extraordinary feats, acceptance of duʿā's and the ability to exercise one's influence are not from among the essentials of being a shaykh.

In short, the company of those who possess the above qualities is especially effective. However, the prerequisite for the effectiveness of this company is for a person to have the intention of developing a desire for obedience and dislike for sinning in his heart. Together with this, he must be particular about informing his shaykh about the conditions and emotions of his heart. He must then adhere to whatever treatment the shaykh prescribes.

The second is that if the company of a Sufi master is not available, a person must read about or listen to the stories about the lives and strivings of the people of Allāh *taʿālā*. However, the person must never get occupied with articles which deal with intricate issues related to Sufism. Those which deal with training the inner self and culturing of the self are worthy of practising on.

The third concerns meditating on death and whatever follows death. This refers to the events from the time the soul is about to be extracted to entering Paradise or the Hell-fire and its associated terrors. For example, the questions which will be posed by Munkar and Nakīr, the torments and comforts of the grave, the raising from the graves, the weighing of deeds, accounting of deeds, recompense, crossing the bridge over Hell, and so on. A person must set aside at least twenty minutes every day and think about all this. The qualities which help in strengthening a person's resolve and courage are perfected through this meditation of death. These qualities include abstinence and fear.

This brings us to the end of the discussion on the ways in which the causes of upheaval may be removed. The method of

rectification has been identified completely. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. The beauty of this entire programme is that it is extremely easy, and so complete that the entire ummah can rectify itself in the shortest period of time with the slightest amount of focus. It is now left to those who want to derive the benefit. A poet says:

> We have advised ourselves and spent some time in this regard. If any person's ears are not prepared to pay heed, they will not pay heed. The duty of the messengers is merely to convey the message.

Postscript

There is one additional point with regard to the course of action for the 'ulamā', viz. enjoining good and forbidding evil. Non-'ulamā' are also included in this in certain situations. However, general command is specifically for the 'ulamā'. When the masses cross the bounds and enter this domain, it leads to tribulation and enmity in most cases. Moreover, the masses by and large do not know the limits of command and this results in extremism in Dīn. Furthermore, most of the masses have not cultured the self. Consequently, there is a lot of self –conceit in their command. In order to demonstrate this meaning, some commentators consider the word من in the verse

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ

To show a part or portion. [Which means that some people should take up the task and not all]. Sometimes, commanding good and forbidding evil is obligatory, e.g. where the doer is ignorant, he has full control over his action or there is full hope that he will accept [when he is informed of his wrong]. If not, it is desirable. To inform the person in privacy and to adopt a soft approach are from among the etiquette of commanding good and forbidding evil. After that, if prudence demands, one may inform him publicly and in a harsh tone. If he cannot do this, he must turn away and pray for the person.

Included in commanding good and forbidding evil is the duty of inviting the unbelievers. This could be done verbally or through writings to the unbelievers of one's own country and of other countries as well. Although it is no longer obligatory at present because the injunctions of Dīn have become quite widespread, if someone takes up the courage, he will certainly be acting on

resoluteness. If a person learns the language of those nations for the realization and achievement of inviting them to Islam, then provided it is done with sincerity, it will be an actual act of worship. For example, if a person learns English and other languages at present for the realization of this purpose.

Conclusion

Included among the points which are associated to conveying the injunctions [of Islam] is the duty of taking special precautions for the preservation of the injunctions. In other words, the attacks and adulterations against the principles and subsidiary matters of Islam – whether by the unbelievers or the bidʿatīs – must be defended and removed so that those who are seeking the truth are protected against doubts and misgivings. If there is a need to reject and refute the false creeds for the realization of this objective [of defending Islam] or there is some advantage in having a debate with them, it should not be shunned. If debating is condoned in these times which are filled with upheavals and disturbances, then it must be for the same objective because fanaticism is so much on the rise that the establishing of the truth through debates has no longer remained the objective. If it becomes necessary to learn the sciences and arts of the false creeds for the sake of debating and discussing with them, then this is also an act of worship. For example, to study science and related subjects in today's times.

These are all procedures and measures for the sake of rectification. After all this, a major need is to pray to Allāh *taʿālā* and to beseech Him. A poet says:

> We have said all this, but the reality of the matter is that we are nothing without the affections of Allāh *taʿālā*.
>
> Even if you become an angel without the affections of Allāh *taʿālā* and His special servants, your book of deeds will still be black.

Sealing off obstacles to rectification

Previously, the measures for rectifying the upheavals in the ummah were identified and explained. Together with acting on each measure, it is obligatory to abstain from the obstacles which would render the measures ineffective. Just as

abstention and special precautions are considered to be necessary for the treatment of physical ailments, it would be crucial to avoid matters which would cause impediments and gaps in their effectiveness.

Some of the measures were related to the ʿulamāʾ. They are not intended at this point because they themselves know what to do. Here, the measures are directed to the masses only. I will write in this regard as much as is required. The following points were mentioned in this chapter:

1. To study, read or listen to Dīnī books.
2. To inquire about rulings from the ʿulamāʾ.
3. To listen to lectures and talks.
4. To be in the company of the Sufi masters.
5. To personally teach or read to one's family members, or to do this through someone else.

We find some people committing reckless acts in each of these five points. This is similar to not adhering to precautions [specified by a doctor] in the treatment of an illness. A concise warning is needed with reference to each of these points.

1. To study, read or listen to Dīnī books

Nowadays a major wrong is committed in this regard. The moment a person sees or hears about a book on Islam – whether its subject matter is true or false, its author is a Hindu, Christian, a pseudo-Muslim, or a Muslim who is a bidʿatī - he starts studying it without making any inquiries. Then you get articles published in newspapers on certain issues. There are several harms in this. Sometimes, due to a lack of knowledge, one cannot distinguish which article is authentic and which is not. An incorrect article is considered correct, and the person succumbs to wrongs in his beliefs or actions. At other times it is known from before hand that the article is not authentic, but the style of writing of some writers is so captivating and enchanting that the person is immediately affected by it. When he compares it to his beliefs, he feels his previous beliefs are weak and insubstantial. Thus he considers his previous beliefs to be wrong and the latter ones to be correct. Many a time, although he does not accept it [the new

article], he becomes doubtful and uncertain, worries about it and becomes distressed.

At times a person wants to verify from others. But because the article is a bit complex and his knowledge and brains are insufficient to grasp it, he does not understand it. Based on his misunderstanding, he poses futile questions to others and distresses them. He does not realize his own shortcoming, feels that those who are giving him answers are unable to answer his questions, says that their knowledge or character is restricted, and has ill feelings towards them. Other harms are also caused.

To put an end to all this, when a person comes across any book, newspaper article, periodical or any lecture, he must never read it until he shows it to an erudite ʿālim and obtains his view. I had devoted an entire article on the harms of newspaper articles some time back and had given it the title *Akhbār Baynī*. Some objectors raised a tumult against it without even reading it. However, it is worth a careful study.

The present discussion or that previous article is most certainly not intended to state that it is unlawful to read a newspaper or book. My objective is that these things have certain harms and it is obligatory to save the Muslims from harm. One cannot be saved from harm without knowledge of it. If a person does not have knowledge about it, he must consult an erudite ʿālim and it will then be necessary for him to follow his directives in this regard. It is most sad that despite the clarity of this issue, my prohibition is labelled narrow-minded and extremist. What! If a father stops his child from eating a sweetmeat which has been mixed with poison, will any intelligent person label the father narrow-minded and extremist?! If they do, they will say it with real affection. If anyone claims that he reads such articles under the principle of:

خذ ما صفا ودع ما كدر

Accept what is pure and reject what is filthy.

Then the answer is that it is clear from this explanation that in order to be able to distinguish this [purity from filth], a person has to possess complete knowledge and understanding, while

this entire discussion is on the person who does not have these capabilities.

A person not considering himself to be devoid of these capabilities is not acceptable. Rather, it is sufficient for an expert ʿālim to say that the person is incapable. This is the same reason why Hadrat Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* stopped Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* from studying the Taurāh despite the latter's firmness in knowledge and practice. This, despite the fact that the Taurāh was a divinely revealed book although alterations had been made to it. Furthermore, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was not studying it on his own. Rather, he was reading it to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who could obviously show to him what is part of the original book and what is fabricated. There was no possibility of any harm after all this. Despite this, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* strictly prohibited him and expressed his extreme displeasure – as mentioned in the Hadīth of Dārimī - so that this action does not open the doors to the harms which are associated to this practice in the future.

After all the past and present proofs, it is hoped that a just and far-sighted person does not have any doubts. As per this discussion, when he comes across any book, etc. in which there are some advantages and harms, he abstains from them. As for books which contain only harms, e.g. novels, which render a person's actions and character most filthy, how can it ever be considered permissible to read them? Especially for the youth and women. In fact, if books of this nature are seen in the house, a person will be fulfilling their rights by burning them.

I consider it useful to list a short syllabus containing books which ought to be studied so that a person may become occupied by studying them and is safeguarded against doubtful books. The books are: all parts of *Bahishtī Zewar, Taʿlim ad-Dīn, Furūʿ al-Īmān, Jazā' al-Aʿmāl, Tablīgh-e-Dīn, Qasd as-Sabīl* and *Shauq-e-Watan.* If a person needs a longer and more detailed list, he must consult an erudite ʿālim.

2. To inquire about rulings from the 'ulamā'

There are several errors committed in this regard. One is that a person asks a ruling whenever he feels like. Sometimes, he

does not even investigate to see if the person whom he is asking is really an ʿālim or not. He just hears the name of a Maulānā and asks him a ruling. Sometimes, he knows that a certain person is an ʿālim but does not know what his creed is or what his beliefs are. An answer provided by such a person can sometimes corrupt a person's beliefs or actions. Then there are times when a person falls into hesitation and doubt, gets distressed or causes distress to others as mentioned in the previous point. You get a person asking about the same ruling from several places, and every so often receives different answers. In such a case, he is either at a loss at identifying the preferred opinion or will practise on the answer which suits his self. More often than not, this becomes the person's habit, and so, his purpose in asking questions is to obtain an answer which is suited to his self. As long as he does not get such an answer, he will continue asking different people. This practice is obviously very far from integrity, is nothing but following of one's desires, and amounts to playing around with the Dīn.

A third mistake is committed from the second one. The answer of one scholar is quoted to another scholar who also answered on that question. Since temperaments have specific traits, the manner and tone of quoting the answer is confrontational. Consequently, the second scholar may utter something inappropriate against the first scholar or against his question. The one who quoted the answer or some other person then goes to the first scholar and conveys what the second scholar said. The first one responds by saying something against the second scholar. Sometimes, in fact in most cases, changes takes place in the words or meanings of what is quoted from one to the other. This results in a major conflict.

Another mistake is asking unnecessary rulings. Then there is the error of asking for proofs for the rulings. These can only be understood after having acquired some of the prescribed sciences. Since the questioner does not have this knowledge, he does not understand the proof. If a scholar does not provide a proof for the same reason [that the person will not understand it], the person feels that the scholar is bad-natured.

Yet another error is to start arguing and debating about a certain ruling. Then in order to gain support for his opinion, the person will obtain fatwās, show them to his adversary and

use them as evidence against him. The adversary will now try to obtain fatwās which are in his favour. This results in unnecessary fighting and disputes whereas it is most dangerous for the masses to fall into all this.

When a person belonging to one of the deviated sects disputes with a person, he must refer the person to the ʿulamā' and put an end to the discussion immediately.

All these errors can be rectified as follows: When you experience a necessary matter for your own practice – and not for engaging in discussions and debates – you must refer it to a person whose genuineness and reliability you have ascertained from before hand through correct sources, and you also have faith and confidence in the person. Do not ask for a proof. Do not – unnecessarily – pose the same question to another ʿālim. If after all these considerations you still have some doubt or are not fully convinced, ask another ʿālim who possesses the same above-mentioned qualities. If the second one's answer is different from the first, do not quote it to the first one. Act on the one towards which your heart is satisfied. Do the same thing when – without consulting a second ʿālim – you come to know of an answer different from the first one.

If you pose a question in writing, then in addition to the above considerations, you must also bear in mind the following: Your question must be absolutely clear and your writing must be legible. As far as possible, do not write anything that is useless and unconnected. Write your name and address clearly. Even if you send questions to the same place several times, ensure you write your name and address clearly. Ensure you include a stamp [or prepaid envelope] for the reply. Even if you send a letter by hand [via someone] include a stamp and your full name and address because the person may not be able to write the answer immediately, he will then post the answer later on or return the stamp to you. If you have several questions, do not write them on a post card. If this happens incidentally, number the questions and keep a copy for yourself. Inform the person to whom you are writing that you have a copy of the questions in the sequence as numbered, so that he does not have to rewrite the questions. He must merely answer the questions in the same sequence.

3. To listen to lectures and talks

The wrongs which are committed under point number one are committed here as well. The reason is that writing and speaking are quite close as regards the rules which they allude to and the effects which they have. What I mean is that people listen to talks of every type of person. This has the same harms as in point number one. The same way of putting an end to them will apply here as there. In other words, when a lecture is to be delivered, consult a reliable ʿālim of your town or near place and ask him about the lecturer. If he assures you that the lecturer is sound, you may attend. If not, you must not attend. The reason for this is that some lecturers are ignorant while others hold incorrect beliefs. Some of them are very convincing while others are extremely crafty. They will first speak in line with their addressees, then once they have created a bond with them, they start drawing them towards their creed. As Maulānā says:

> The hunter blew the whistle loudly so that he could capture the rooster which was catching the other roosters.
>
> When an enemy speaks in the tone of a friend, you must understand that it is a trap, even if he tells you something which makes sense.
>
> I have come with pieces of the heart. I will sell to anyone who comes before me a piece from the pieces of my heart.

If, even after you have taken the precautions, you hear something which is doubtful, you must verify it from reputable ʿulamā'.

4. To be in the company of Sufi masters

The deception which is to be found here is extremely common. In other words, the signs which ought to be in the Sufi masters are not considered. I had quoted this from *Qaṣd as-Sabīl*. The way to put an end to this is to consider and bear in mind the signs which I had listed. As Maulānā Rūmī *raḥimahullāh* says:

> There are many devils in the form of humans. You must therefore not give your hand to anyone and everyone.

You must also understand the harm of the company of the one who is merely a friend to you but is irreligious. This is also a major error. It is proven through experience that the effects of one friend most certainly rub off on the other, and the harmful one's effects rub off quicker. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

المرء على دين خليله، فلينظر بحاله

A person is considered to be on the ways of his friend. He must therefore examine his condition.

5. To personally teach one's family members

The treatment for the errors which are committed in this regard are scattered over the previous four points. The gist is that the previously mentioned considerations must be taken into account for the books which are selected for one's family or a lecture which they must listen to. Furthermore, it must be clearly and specifically stated that the teacher of a young girl must neither be a young non-mahram nor a middle-aged one. It must be considered unlawful to obtain such a teacher.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

Note: From the compiler of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*: After this, Hadrat Wālā highlighted many errors which are committed in matters related to jurisprudence and provided minute corrective measures for them. He went into quite a bit of detail in this regard. It is most beneficial for the rectification of the Muslim nation.

Hadrat Wālā had intended to provide corrections for all the chapters on jurisprudence, but he became so occupied in other Dīnī services that he could not find the time. Nevertheless, the present collection is also a lot. The following themes are explained in great detail in volumes one and two of *Islāh Inqilāb-e-Ummat*:

1. Rectification with regard to the Qur'ān.
2. Rectification with regard to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.
3. Rectification with regard to salāh.
4. Rectification with regard to fasting and associated matters.
5. Rectification with regard to zakāh.

6. Rectification with regard to hajj.
7. Rectification with regard to qurbānī.
8. Rectification with regard to certain monetary acts of obedience.
9. Rectification with regard to death.
10. Rectification with regard to travelling.
11. Rectification with regard to education of women.
12. Rectification with regard to fulfilling the rights of a teacher, student and classmate.
13. Rectification with regard to marriage.
14. Rectification with regard to making the lawful unlawful and vice versa in matters related to marriage.
15. Rectification with regard to the legal guardian in marriage.
16. Rectification with regard to compatibility in marriage.
17. Rectification with regard to dowry.
18. Rectification with regard to justice between wives.
19. Rectification with regard to breastfeeding.
20. Rectification with regard to divorce and associated matters.
21. Rules of providing for the wife.
22. Chapter on spiritual spending.
23. Rectification with regard to picking up lost items.
24. Rectification with regard to a missing person.
25. Rectification with regard to reprimanding, finding fault and labelling someone as an unbeliever.

Makārim ʻAsharah

All praise is due to Allāh *taʻālā*. Salutations and peace to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʻalayhi wa sallam*. The reader is informed that when it came to relating incidents displaying Hadrat Wālā's attention to propagation and rectification of the Muslim nation in *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, the respectable and honourable compiler – Janāb Khwājah Sāhib – said to me: "You have an affinity with incidents of this nature so you would know them well. You should therefore note them down." I replied: "It is most inappropriate for someone like me to add anything to such an exquisite compilation." However, Khwājah Sāhib's leave from his work was to come to an end soon and he had no time at all. This is why he insisted on me repeatedly. I was forced to take up the courage and wrote these ten incidents. I have personal knowledge of incidents numbered three to ten (i.e. the last eight) while I had the honour of hearing the first

two directly from Hadrat Wālā but did not recall them exactly. I therefore requested Hadrat Wālā to narrate them a second time to which he – out of his extreme kindness – repeated them in detail to me. After compiling all ten incidents, I read them to Hadrat Wālā who – out of his extreme consideration - listened to them most attentively. A poet says:

Who am I to have the audacity of going to that perfumed one? O beloved! The dust of your threshold is the crown for my head. You show a lot of mercy to me.

This insignificant person cannot show gratitude sufficiently. O Allāh! You reward him with the best of rewards. O Allāh! Accept from us, surely You are all-hearing, all-knowing.

ʿAbd al-Karīm
25 Muharram 1355 A.H.

First incident: Tablīgh in Gajnīr

It was a very long time ago when Hadrat Wālā went to Kānpūr. While there, he heard that the Aryans in Gajnīr were causing mischief and that Muslims were influenced by their mischief and were on the verge of becoming apostates. The moment he heard of this, Hadrat Wālā resolved to go there. In addition to packing his food requirements, he also carried a tent and other sleeping necessities. When people heard of this, a considerable number of them got ready to accompany him.

On reaching there, Hadrat Wālā felt that it would be most appropriate to first speak to the seniors of the place. On making inquiries, it was learnt that two persons were the ring leaders, Nanhū Singh and Udhār Singh. The original documents of these two stated that their names were Nanhū Khān and Udhār Khān, but as per the custom of unbelief of that place, they were known by the surname of Singh. The two were called one after the other so that their views and thoughts could be ascertained easily. It was summer, they were offered a sherbet drink but they refused saying: "We do not eat or drink anything which has been prepared by Muslims." They had other baseless customs such as *pherā*[1] and having a lock of hair on the top of the head on the occasions of marriage. A person who is wealthy must feed the entire tribe. They also

[1] Walking of the bride and bridegroom around a sacred fire.

have the practice of circumcision. Their ignorance can be gauged from the fact that when they were asked if they were Hindus, they replied in the negative. When asked if they were Muslims, they replied in the negative. They were eventually asked: "Then what are you?" They replied: "We are new Muslims."

In the course of the conversation, Nanhū Khān expressed the view that the ruling of *yanūg* is so filthy in the Aryan religion that any ordinary sound-minded person will never embrace this religion after hearing it. Udhār Khān said: "We make *taʿziyahs*, how can we be Hindus?" H̲ad̲rat Wālā said: "You must certainly continue making *taʿziyahs*." Some of H̲ad̲rat Wālā's companions objected to this but he replied by saying: "Bidʿah is a protection for them against unbelief. It is therefore unwise to stop them from this." After these [private discussions with the ring leaders] H̲ad̲rat Wālā delivered several public lectures. One such lecture was extremely successful when some seniors from a nearby village, Bārah Pargunahpūr, came to support this delegation of H̲ad̲rat Wālā. These people were quite influential, and so, their arrival helped H̲ad̲rat Wālā's cause tremendously. Out of consideration to the mind-set of the people of this area, the announcement which H̲ad̲rat Wālā made was that there will be a *kathā* (religious recital) and the theme of the lecture was on the blessed birth of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. H̲ad̲rat Wālā also had sweetmeats distributed. All these arrangements were made in consideration of the locality. However, H̲ad̲rat Wālā himself did not attend this assembly. Some of those who had accompanied H̲ad̲rat Wālā used to conduct assemblies of this nature, so they were asked to oversee and supervise everything.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā stayed over for several days. He only returned when the people made firm promises of not reneging from Islam. In their foolishness, they had added: "We will not be Muslims like you, but will remain new Muslims as we are." Maulānā Saʿīd Ah̲mad Thānwī Marh̲ūm had also accompanied H̲ad̲rat Wālā from Thānah Bhawan. In the course of the stay in Gajnīr, H̲ad̲rat Wālā sent him to some of the nearby villages. However, the people showed absolute disregard to him and did not even give him a place to spend the afternoon. The Maulānā had to bear severe hardships because it was the season for hot winds. A Brahmin eventually gave him shelter. He had carried a barley broth with him but no one gave him a pot in which he

could heat it. The poor Maulānā poured water in a handkerchief, softened the barley slightly and ate it. He had to suffer unbearable fatigue and difficulty, and returned because of the people's total disregard. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower His abundant mercy on him.

Second incident: Intention to go to Yūrap for tablīgh

This incident occurred quite some time after the previous one. Bābū Habīb Ahmad Sāhib Thānwī went to Yūrap for some work. Due to his many connections there, he had the opportunity of speaking about the salient features of Islam. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, a few people embraced Islam. Some of them belonged to respectable families. The Bābū Sāhib needed to ask Hadrat Wālā something in this regard, so he wrote a letter to him. Hadrat Wālā received several more letters. A few new Muslim British people asked him to provide them with suitable Muslim names. A woman by the name of Brady was a professor or principal in a college. Hadrat Wālā suggested the name Buraydah for her. She was overjoyed and had a letter of thanks written to Hadrat Wālā. These correspondences resulted in the new Muslims of this area to develop links with Hadrat Wālā.

One letter came via Bābū Sāhib in which it was stated: "We would like to come and meet you but we fear that since our women are not used to purdah, they might not be able to adhere to the purdah requirements and Hadrat might be displeased." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "Covering of the face and wrists is not obligatory in itself. Rather, it is commanded due to temptation. The people of this area feel intimidated by your women [Englishwomen], so it is far-fetched for them to have passionate thoughts about them. Since the cause is nonexistent, they could be permitted." Also in the course of these correspondences, Bābū Sāhib wrote to Hadrat Wālā saying: "It will be extremely beneficial to the people if you come here. I will join you in the work of propagation. You may deliver the talks and I will translate into English."

Hadrat Wālā decided to undertake a journey to Yūrap, made his own arrangements for his expenses and decided to take Sufi Muhammad ʿAlī Sāhib of Gulāuthī to accompany him because the latter was a good planner and could also converse in English to a certain extent. However, Hadrat Wālā sent a letter to Bābū Sāhib in which he wrote: "Before I come there, I

feel it would be appropriate if you note some of the people's doubts and misgivings and send them to me. I will then reply to those doubts and misgivings and you must read them to the people. In this way, you will be able to gauge whether my replies are in agreement with their temperament or not. If they will benefit from them, my coming there will be appropriate. If not, why should I undertake such a lengthy journey?"

Bābū Sāhib could not reply to this letter. In fact, it may have not reached him because he passed away. Hadrat Wālā did not undertake the journey and had to cancel his plans. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Third incident: The laws of inheritance related to Punjab

On one occasion someone mentioned in Hadrat Wālā's blessed assembly that the laws of inheritance in Punjab are in conflict with the pure Sharīʿah. For example, a sister, daughter, etc. do not receive any share. In addition to not practising on the Sharīʿah laws of inheritance, people do not even know these laws. In fact, even the majority of religious people are totally unaware of the inheritance laws. The reason for more inattention in this regard is that the ʿulamā' there also do not pay much attention to this. They neither speak about it in their lectures nor on other occasions. In fact, most people do not even pay any regard to their own actions. The prevailing norms and practices have caused them to be totally indifferent. Hadrat Wālā said with genuine concern: "It is essential to draw the attention of the Muslims there." I said: "If the senior ʿulamā' make special efforts in this regard, it is possible that some people will realize. Apart from this, one cannot expect any benefit from ordinary efforts." Hadrat Wālā replied: "We must not desist from as much effort as we can make. There is no need to worry about the benefits." After hearing this, I took up some courage and, when I returned to my hometown, I began speaking about this important issue in the surrounding areas. I also participated in certain gatherings in Amritsar and Lahore for the same purpose. Unfortunately, the organizers offered the excuse that people will oppose this and the gathering might turn out to be unsuccessful.

After some time I acquired this greatest of bounties when Hadrat Wālā accepted my invitation and came to my in-laws' place in Urdun which is close to Rājpūrah. Hadrat Wālā also stayed over in Rājpūrah. When this issue was mentioned before

Hadrat Wālā, he addressed me saying: "There is a need to go to Punjab in order to spread information about this issue." I offered the excuse that I was not qualified for this and added: "Even if I do take up the courage, it would require a lot of expenses." Hadrat Wālā said: "Allāh willing, arrangements for that will be made." The moment I returned home, I received a money order for 30 rupees. Undertaking such a journey was now essential and I started efforts in this regard.

From my journey to Amritsar and Lahore, I gauged a severe need to have the writings of senior 'ulamā' on the subject with me. To this end, I sent questions to 40-50 places, and commenced my journey after placing my trust in Allāh *taʿālā*. I reached Lahore while stopping along the way at Sirhind and other places. I directed my efforts at addressing the 'ulamā' and Islamic organizations because the issue can spread very easily through them. No matter where I went and in almost every level of society, this unjust practice [of depriving inheritance to sisters and daughters] was defended through various types of explanations. After much deliberation, the people had to acknowledge the need for such a movement [of informing the public about the inheritance laws]. During this lengthy journey, I came across just one group in Lahore where some of its members had the same concern about this issue and who also made an intention to make some efforts in this regard. However, there seemed to be no solution because of the general opposition of people.

I then wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā giving him a gist of all my observations. I added: "I am thinking of returning from here." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "As long as there is no despair, we have to make an earnest effort." My courage increased somewhat after receiving this piece of advice. I remained in Lahore for a few days and proceeded forward. However, I considered it essential to print the replies which I received [from the various 'ulamā']. This is why I had to return from Wazīrābād, came to Thānah Bhawan and had the fatwās printed under the title *Allāh's Will With Regard to The Injustices in Punjab*. I then decided to take these fatwās and go to Punjab but we received the sorrowful news of apostasy in and around Agra. Hadrat Wālā asked me: "If you go there [Agra], will it not affect your efforts in the line of the laws of inheritance?" I replied: "They will only be delayed, they will not be really affected." Hadrat Wālā said: "Very well, we will have to give

preference to what is more important. Commence in the name of Allāh *taʿālā* and start the work of propagating Islam in Agra and surrounding areas."

I proceeded towards Agra and – under the advice of Hadrat Wālā – the printed fatwās were posted to the various cities, towns and villages of Punjab. In fact, a book titled *Ghasab al-Mīrāth* was printed and distributed via post. Almost all the expenses of printing and postage were borne by Hadrat Wālā. Some monies were also sent by a few of my well-wishers. In short, together with propagation, Hadrat Wālā paid particular attention to these matters. When the fatwā and book were finished, a large number were reprinted. Hadrat Wālā sent me to participate in three sessions of the Jamʿīyyatul 'Ulamā' in order to impress on the organization the importance of this issue. Due to several reasons, I was not successful in the first two sessions. However, in the third session of 1343 A.H. which was held in Murādābād, a powerful decision was made. After sufficient work was accomplished in the area of apostasy [Agra], Hadrat Wālā wrote in reply to a letter of mine: "I feel you should leave all this and proceed to Punjab in order to establish justice on the issue of inheritance."

I travelled to Punjab once again. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib was sent to accompany me. Consequently, the journey was easier and the impact of the efforts was more.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that within a short time, a lot of work was done in all of Punjab, Sarhad and to a certain extent, Sindh. Bearing in mind the conditions, we did not expect the people to pay any attention at all. So much so that I wrote in a letter to Hadrat Wālā: "I request your duʿā's. It is only through Hadrat Wālā's duʿā's that an insignificant person like myself can hope for some success." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "I am extremely concerned but you seem to be losing hope with the people's condition." By virtue of Hadrat Wālā's focus and prayers, the results were tremendous and extremely swift. Long before our return, people began making efforts to change the law and are continuing in this regard. Allāh willing, they will succeed in the near future. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable the Muslims to realize this and other objectives, reward all those who made efforts in this regard and maintain Hadrat Wālā's shadow over us. Āmīn.

Note: Some of the letters of correspondence between myself and Hadrat Wālā of this period are still preserved. I am quoting one of them because of its immense benefit.

There is one matter which I really need to discuss. In one of our sessions, a distinguished member insisted that I become a member as well. Since it is difficult to gain access to the people without being a member, I gave in my name where members have the right to make decisions. I did this so that I could advance the cause of inheritance. However, after listening to the detailed lectures and talks there, I felt quite constricted and felt that I should hand in my resignation. But then my contacts with those people will no longer remain and the work which I am able to delegate to them will no longer be accomplished. I am quite confused.

Reply: The work that has to be done is not dependent on being a member and it is not obligatory to delegate work to them. After the Qur'ānic instruction: "do not sit, after recollection, with the wrongdoers"[1] there is no reason to remain. It is obligatory on you to hand in your resignation immediately.

Fourth incident: Putting an end to apostasy

When Hadrat Wālā heard about apostasy spreading in Agra and surrounding areas in 1341 A.H., he indicated for me to go there. This was mentioned briefly in the previous point. I replied by saying that Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib would be more suitable for this task. Hadrat Wālā said that it should be left to Maulwī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib to decide who should go. I replied: "My opinion is of no value and does not need to be deliberated upon." Hadrat Wālā replied: "This would be best and – Allāh willing – there will be blessings in it." Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib was in the library, Hadrat Wālā called out to him and said: "I want to send him but he feels that Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib will be more suitable." He also explained the reasoning behind both opinions. Maulānā Zafar Ahmad said: "I feel that both must go. This would accommodate both views and it is difficult to undertake such a journey alone." Hadrat Wālā replied with absolute joy: "Excellent." I smiled and said: "Both views are victorious." Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib had gone home, so a letter was written to him asking him to

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[1] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 68.

attend an assembly at Madrasah ʿAbd ar-Rabb in Delhi. In the meantime, I had the honour of having the company of Hadrat Wālā on the journey to Delhi.

After the assembly, Hadrat Wālā provided the two of us with guidelines and pieces of advice, prayed for us and bid us farewell. He maintained this programme with full attention for two years. He himself undertook a journey [to this region] and delivered a talk titled *al-Itmām li Niʿmatil Islam* (perfection of the bounty of Islam) in Rewārī, Nārnaul and Ismāʿīl Pūr. This lecture is made up of three parts. Hadrat Wālā intended undertaking a second journey to Nūh, Fīrozpūr, Jharkā and other places but developed an illness which prevented him from further journeys.

Hadrat Wālā was strongly attached to the programme of propagation in this region to the extent that a friend of mine wanted to take me with him for hajj. I was most enthusiastic about this and was overjoyed by the offer. When I sought Hadrat Wālā's permission, he said: "The work in which you are presently occupied is superior to an optional hajj and takes preference over it." He added with real fervour: "It was for such instances that Hadrat Masʿūd Bek *rahimahullāh* said:

> O you people who are going for hajj! Where are you? Where are you? The Beloved is here, come here, come here.

Hadrat Wālā provided me with guidelines whenever I presented myself to him, and would continually afford me with useful points in his letters to me. He would also write words of encouragement together with his prayers for me. He wrote in one of his letters:

As-salāmu ʿalaykum.

My hopes have been kindled after hearing about the conditions there. It was only with the going of devoted people like yourself and later on of Maulwī Muhammad Ilyās Sāhib,[1] that I was fully convinced of success. Although knowledge of the unseen is with Allāh *taʿālā* alone, my heart gives testimony that from

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[1] After reaching Agra, we learnt that there was a need to go to Palūl. We proceeded to Palūl, we were then accompanied by Maulwī Muhammad Ilyās Sāhib, with whom we travelled to Nūh and other places.

all the delegations which have gone there, yours will be the most beneficial.

He wrote in another letter:

As-salāmu ʿalaykum

I received your letter and received quite detailed descriptions of the conditions there. My hopes rose tremendously and my heart testifies that – Allāh willing –the success which will be enjoyed by your group in this regard will probably not be achieved by even other bigger groups. The reason for this is as described by Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh*:

> The effulgence of the Kaʿbah increases at every moment. This is due to the sincerity of Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām*.

May Allāh *taʿālā* be with you and all your associates. Convey my salām to all your associates who are with you at present, read this letter to them, and request them all for duʿā's for the present objective and for myself as well. I am also praying for you all.

Friday, 24 Ramadān 1341 A.H.

Hadrat Wālā wrote in another letter (which he probably sent upon his return from his journey to Rewārī and other places):

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I reached home yesterday, Friday. I am making earnest duʿā' for the acceptance of your efforts. My heart testifies to the fact that you people will be the most successful. All the letters sent by you and your associates are kept safely. When there is an occasion for it, they will be printed so that the readers may be overjoyed.

Hadrat Wālā wrote in another letter:

As-salāmu ʿalaykum.

My heart was overjoyed at reading your letter. My heart bears testimony that – Allāh willing - the success of you and your associates will be far more than that of those having all the means and authority.

I am making duʿā' for you and all your associates. Was salām.

I assumed that the sole purpose of all these statements was that Hadrat Wālā was saying them to encourage and persuade

us. However, one and half years after all our efforts, a group wrote detailed accounts of the propagation efforts of the entire region (i.e. of 29 districts) and published them. The report clearly stated that the area of Palūl (where Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd S̱āẖib and myself were working) had the highest success rate. Only then did I realize that these words of encouragement were actually glad tidings and predictions which, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, proved to be true.

In addition to the above concern for propagation of Islam, H̱aḏrat Wālā wrote the following books during the same period: *al-Insidād li Fitnatil Irtidād, H̱usn-e-Islām kī Ek Jhalak, Namāz kī Khūbyā.* The second of these books was also printed in Hindi and distributed, and I think that the third one was most probably printed in Hindi as well. Many of those who were hesitant about Islam was because they felt terrified at the fact that Muslims eat beef. H̱aḏrat Wālā wrote a book in which he proved the slaughtering of cows from the Veda. This book was also published. Several makātib were established and these were, to a great extent, supported by H̱aḏrat Wālā. Other sources of funding were also arranged. He included the topic of tablīgh in his lectures. Three of them merit special mention: (1) *ad-Daʿwah ilallāh*, (2) *Maẖāsin al-Islām*, (3) *Ādāb at-Tablīgh*.

In short, H̱aḏrat Wālā paid attention to rectification and propagation from every angle. After about two years of striving and efforts, considerable control was achieved over the apostasy which was prevailing and every type of doubt and misgiving about Islam was removed from the people. The need for makātib for future rectification was felt and the task of their supervision remained. I wrote to H̱aḏrat Wālā asking him permission to go to Palūl in order to collect funds for the makātib. H̱aḏrat Wālā wrote back: "Very well. You may go provided the work of propagation is not affected by these other activities [of collecting funds]. We have gauged from experience that the means must not be abandoned. All we have to do is propagate irrespective of whether we see the fruits or not. Furthermore, I feel you should leave aside all these other activities and proceed to Punjab to establish a movement for justice as regards inheritance."

I then proceeded to Punjab as I had described in the previous point. On my return, I settled down in Thānah Bhawan as per H̱aḏrat Wālā's suggestion. Maulwī ['Abd al-Majīd] S̱āẖib

continued with the work of propagation and eventually stopped travelling to that place after twelve years because of a lack of funds. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept these efforts, maintain the benefits of the work which was done, and enable it to progress. Āmīn.

I consider it necessary to add a few points to the above. Hadrat Wālā strongly emphasises on the person doing the work of propagation to never be a burden on the people for his food or any other needs. In fact, he must decline even if they willingly and happily offer their services. The only permission which Hadrat Wālā grants in this regard is that if a person takes money from the propagator for flour and other ingredients and has the food cooked for him, then it is acceptable provided it is not against any local wisdom and there is no Sharʿī prohibition.

If a propagator cannot make his own arrangements for certain essentials, e.g. a bed, and someone willingly offers it to the propagator, then Hadrat Wālā permits him to use one, but he himself must not ask for such items. (However, if he goes to a person's house after being invited by him, it is permissible for him to accept his food and to take money for travelling expenses). This must be made a general practice [and applied to everyone] because if he makes a certain person an exception to this rule because of his special relationship with him, others will have a cause to complain.

The other point in this regard is that Hadrat Wālā shows a lot of concern about the comfort of the propagator and gives him a lot of leeway as regards travelling expenses so that he can carry out his work enthusiastically. [The extent of Hadrat Wālā's consideration can be gauged from this incident]: Before one of my journeys for propagation, I said to him that I do not have the strength to cook my own food and I find it difficult to ask people to cook for me. Hadrat Wālā sent a cook to accompany me. Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā does not lay down any specific manner or practice as regards delivering of lectures, talks and so one. Rather, he leaves it to the propagator's opinion and the latter's inclination and enthusiasm.

The third point is that Hadrat Wālā does not ask for a detailed account of expenses. He says: "An unreliable person must not be appointed as a propagator, and there is no need to ask for detailed accounts from a reliable person." He also said on one occasion: "It is always futile to ask for a detailed account. If a

person presents a false account, will you be able to put a stop to it?” Even to me Hadrat Wālā had written at the beginning and said that there is no need for me to send a detailed account. Then in the second month, I apologized for not carrying out his order and still sent an account. Hadrat Wālā still stopped me from doing it and wrote in this regard in the course of another letter. However, when I presented myself before him and we were having a discussion, he said: “I had clearly stated that I have no need for any accounts, but if you still feel you need to provide an account, I will not object; you may do whatever brings comfort to you.” I mentioned these few points as general principles. Practising on them is extremely beneficial. I hope that propagators and organizers will pay special attention to them. Inspiration and help are from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Fifth incident: Establishing makātib in Alwar

It was most probably in 1346 A.H. or 1347 A.H. when I was attached to Madrasah Muʿīn al-Islam in the village of Nauh, district Gurgānwā. Islamic education was forcefully closed down in Alwar. All madāris and makātib – whether big or small – were demolished at once. Many conditions were enforced to stem the continuation of Islamic education, and only a quarter pārā of the Qur’ān and the Urdu edition of *Mā Lā Budda Minhu* were permitted to be taught verbally. They were not permitted to teach anything more. On hearing this terrifying news, I wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā informing him of the situation, and added: “It seems as though we cannot do anything in this regard. Please make duʿā’ that this law breaks down in some way or the other.” Hadrat Wālā asked: “Can’t we resort to any legal action with the government?” I replied: “I do not have the full details, but even if there was any leeway, it would entail a lot of costs.” Hadrat Wālā wrote back: “Tell me what the approximate costs will be.” I estimated the cost to be at least 100 rupees. As far as I remember (I do not have the original letter with me at present, so I cannot quote directly from it) Hadrat Wālā wrote: “Presently I cannot make an absolute promise but – Allāh willing – I will bear in mind to send 100 rupees, but you must put your trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and start the process.”

I first obtained – after much difficulty – a copy of this unjust ruling with full records. This copy was used as a basis for the

case. I then came to Delhi and consulted lawyers and other academics. After ascertaining a detailed nature of the matter, they all said that nothing further can be done because – as per the records – the ruling was promulgated after the Muslims of that region had themselves made such a request. By virtue of Hadrat Wālā's prayers and focus, I still did not lose hope. Instead, as instructed by him, I placed my trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and commenced my efforts with much difficulty. On the other side, Hadrat Wālā was engaged in special duʿā'. Since it was difficult to organize 100 rupees in those days, Hadrat Wālā did not make a firm promise for obtaining this amount. However, he was most concerned about it and was able to send the total amount via a few money orders. The first money order was for five rupees, the second one for ten rupees, the third one for 35 rupees (there were probably two for this amount. I cannot recall clearly because the coupons for some of them were lost). The fourth money order was for 20 rupees and the fifth for 30 rupees. The coupons of the four money orders which I still have are quoted below. The pains which Hadrat Wālā had to go through to obtain this amount can be gauged from the following coupons. They contain other benefits as well, this is why I am quoting them here.

1. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. I learnt of the conditions from your letter. May Allāh *taʿālā* give you success in this regard. I pray for the good health of all who are at home. I am also praying for the matter in Alwar. I am presently sending an amount from the 100 rupees for which I had made an unconfirmed promise.

2. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. I am sending ten rupees of the total 100 rupees. I received your envelope as well and used it for the fees. I think in future, a mere reply card will suffice. I will keep a record of the instalments which I send to you. (the third coupon is not available)

3. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. From the remaining 50 rupees, I was able to obtain 20 rupees. I am sending it now. May Allāh *taʿālā* put an end to this unjust ruling. I am also praying for the madrasah. I have replied to all parts of the postcard. I have one remaining postcard which I will use after considering it to be under your ownership. If it is not yours, I will send it back when replying to your next letter.

4. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. I received your letter. I am praying for ease in all matters. Through whichever way I was able to

collect money for the makātib, I was able to organize 30 rupees which I am sending to you.

Hadrat Wālā's attention and concern had an immediate effect. We experienced an open victory with just 100 rupees. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Sixth incident: Preserving the makātib from compulsory education

I had come to Delhi in the course of my efforts for the makātib of Alwar when I suddenly received news that the makātib in Delhi were also breaking down. After obtaining details about this, I proceeded immediately to Thānah Bhawan and informed Hadrat Wālā that because of the compulsory education, the Qur'ānic makātib of Delhi are also in the process of closing down. Up to that time, eleven makātib in which about 250 children were studying had broken down. Hadrat Wālā was extremely disturbed and made a lot of duʿā' for the preservation of makātib. He then asked me to write a question about it. I wrote a question and gave it to him. Hadrat Wālā wrote his answer. I then went and obtained signatures of concurrence from the 'ulamā' of Sahāranpūr, Deoband and Meerut, and eventually reached Delhi. I also obtained affirmations from the 'ulamā' of Delhi. All these were then published collectively.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this had a great effect. Anjuman Khādim al-Qur'ān was established and it made a lot of effort in this regard. All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā*, through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, we experienced a lot of success in Delhi. No further maktab could be shut down, and those that were shut down were re-established. The efforts which were made in Delhi had a great impact on other areas, especially in Murādābād, Sahāranpūr and so on. A lot of control was achieved at the right time and a lot of concern is shown to the preservation of makātib in these areas to this day. There are appropriate responses [from Muslims] whenever the proponents of compulsory education initiate any action [against the makātib]. May Allāh *taʿālā* make it such that these people abstain from their opposition to Qur'ānic education. Āmīn.

Seventh incident: Movement for the appointment of judges

It is Hadrat Wālā's concern since quite some time for judges in India to be appointed as they had been in the past. He made several different attempts in this regard. For example, he drew

the attention of Hadrat Hāfiz Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, in this regard. He expressed the need for it to Mr. Montego, the ex-minister of India. He also encouraged a few members of the assembly and council in this regard. He even expressed the need for it through certain means before the Simon Commission.

Under the suggestion of Hadrat Wālā, an organization for the appointment of judges was established in Meerut. He published a booklet titled *al-Qaul al-Mādī* and other similar publications and drew the attention of the people through it. It was most probably in 1347 A.H. that a meeting was held in Delhi. In addition to all the members of the assembly and seniors of Delhi, Hadrat Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Janāb Mr. Muhammad ʿAlī Sāhib Marhūm also participated. Distinguished ʿulamā' from Sahāranpūr and Deoband also attended. Hadrat Wālā sent me – this insignificant soul – to attend on behalf of the Khānqāh. The main aim of this meeting was to clarify before the members of the assembly the need for this. This aim was fulfilled very well. However, the entire matter was not resolved as yet and there appeared to be no real form of success. Hadrat Wālā's attention is still directed towards it, and duʿā' is made for its success daily in the Khatm-e-Khwājgān. May Allāh *taʿālā* fulfil this wish in an excellent manner in the near future. Āmīn, through the sanctity of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and all his Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Eighth incident: Attention to propagation

Hadrat Wālā constantly draws the attention of the madāris to give due importance to propagation as they do to education. He initiated a programme of propagation from the Khānqāh since a long time. Although there is no permanent propagator – due to some obstacle – he appoints one whenever he gets an opportunity. In short, Hadrat Wālā is always concerned about propagation. He says on certain occasions: "Propagation is the actual objective of studying and teaching. This was the obligatory duty of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*."

Hadrat Wālā wrote *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* specifically for the sake of propagation. After seeing the people's realization as regards propagation after the publication of this book, Hadrat Wālā prepared a special form of propagation in 1350 A.H. It is most

beneficial and extremely easy. He gave it the title of *Āthār-e-Rahmat* and had it published in 1350 A.H. He sufficed with publishing posters for the other regions and sent them there. But for this region [Thānah Bhawan and surrounding areas], in addition to having a permanent propagator, he appointed a second one for a full year. The surrounding areas benefited tremendously through the blessings of this concern. The work of propagation also started on a large scale in Sahāranpūr and continued for four years. However, the main members could not do much this year because of certain impediments. May Allāh *taʿālā* remove all obstacles as soon as possible so that they can turn their special attention once again. Āmīn.

People of other areas were impressed by these efforts and Hadrat Wālā's aim was, to a certain extent, fulfilled. Unfortunately, the efforts could not be completed till now. We are really falling short in our organizational skills and in continuing the efforts. This is why there are shortcomings in most of our works. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with skill and courage.

Ninth incident: Writing Hīlah-e-Nājizah

Due to the termination of the system of appointment of judges, women of India had to face certain harsh difficulties and undergo various types of hardships. There was a severe need to solve these problems. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Hadrat Wālā abundantly for turning his special attention to this. He first sent several questions to the 'ulamā' of Madīnah Munawwarah, obtained fatwās from them, undertook a thorough research and investigation of the issues, and provided a simple solution which was appropriate to the present situation. He then consulted repeatedly with the 'ulamā' of Deoband and Sahāranpūr, obtained their approval and wrote a book to which he gave a title suited to the subject matter: *al-Hīlah an-Nājizah lil Halīlah al-ʿĀjizah* (a complete solution for the desperate wife). (Even after so much of investigation and consultation with the 'ulamā', Hadrat Wālā says: "For my own ease and also as a precaution, I had two special 'ulamā' and muftī friends to join me in this compilation. Their names are included in the book." – the author of this biography)

After obtaining signatures of approval from Deoband and Sahāranpūr, Hadrat Wālā had the book published and printed. He attached a summary of the book for the masses and gave it

the title *al-Marqūmāt*. This addendum was also printed separately. This entire episode has been related in very concise words [to the reader], but Hadrat Wālā had to endure five continuous years of fatigue and hardship in the preparation of this book. Hadrat Wālā himself says in this regard: "I did not endure so much of hardship for any other book." Apart from the mental toiling, all his efforts and the printing of this cost about 1 000 rupees. Hadrat Wālā himself made arrangements for this. He then sent copies of *al-Marqūmāt* to all the Muslim members of the Assembly so that they may try to make alterations to the constitution accordingly.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's excellent efforts bore immediate fruits. Almost all the 'ulamā' of India concurred with and supported this book. Muslims in general were most appreciative, and the members of the Assembly began efforts for making alterations to the constitution. A rough draft on the Muslim law of annulment of marriage was presented in the Assembly. Unfortunately, the draft disregarded the conditions and restrictions which Hadrat Wālā had noted after paging through the books of jurisprudence and consulting with erudite 'ulamā'. The efforts of the Assembly members need to be acknowledged but the draft has to be approved in the correct Sharʿī form.

Hadrat Wālā explained the shortcomings of the draft verbally to some of the members and in writing to others. He also sent a detailed article to the 'ulamā' in a meeting. Hadrat Wālā sent me to this meeting to clarify the points further. It is not the practice of Hadrat Wālā to do more than this. Nowadays, extremes are also committed in the meanings of attention and opposition. This is why some people have doubts about some of Hadrat Wālā's practices. However, once Allāh *taʿālā* blesses them with understanding, they will realize that Hadrat Wālā pays attention in the true sense of the word and is most cautious about opposition. [A poet says]:

> The goblet of the Sharīʿah in one hand and the rock of love in the other. The one who worships his desires does not know how to take care of a goblet and rock at the same time.

May Allāh *taʿālā* bless this perfect and genuine scholar [Hadrat Wālā] with long life and enable us to follow him. Āmīn.

Tenth incident: The law of endowments

Some years back, when trustees began mismanaging certain endowments, some people found an opportunity to endeavour to lay down laws with regard to endowments. After a minor motion in this regard, an investigative delegation was appointed which began making its rounds in 1930. When this delegation reached here [Thānah Bhawan], Hadrat Wālā had a detailed discussion and clearly proved that the government has no Sharʿī right to lay down such rules. An abridged version of this discussion will be quoted at the end of this section. The delegation received a similar response from Deoband, Sahāranpūr and other places. However, the delegation did receive replies from certain places which were in line with their objectives. Based on this, the delegation prepared a draft law and presented it before the Council. When the draft was published in order to ascertain the general response to it, Hadrat Maulānā Hāfiz ʿAbd al-Latīf Sāhib, the Nāzim of Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr, drew the attention of Hadrat Wālā to do something to put a stop to it.

He also expressed the opinion that the seniors of Deoband and Sahāranpūr should meet in Thānah Bhawan for a detailed discussion. Hadrat Wālā agreed and the principals and other seniors of both places came to Thānah Bhawan on 24 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1352 A.H. After an exhaustive consultation, it was decided that the draft will be studied in detail under the leadership of Hadrat Wālā and its faults will first be highlighted. Thereafter, changes will be suggested so that the draft could come in line with the Sharīʿah. Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib the muftī of Deoband, Janāb Maulwī Jamīl Ahmad Sāhib Thānwī a teacher in Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr and myself were appointed for this task. These two scholars arrived and an assessment of the draft was written after obtaining Hadrat Wālā's approval on each and every aspect. The assessment was completed on 23 Dhū al-Hijjah and it was embellished with Hadrat Wālā's signature of approval. It was then decided to have a meeting in Deoband on the 25th of Dhū al-Hijjah. The ʿulamā' of Sahāranpūr and I reached there, the entire assessment was discussed in detail from morning till about ʿishā time, and a unanimous approval was received. The assessment was sent to the Council after obtaining the signatures of concurrence of 30 ʿulamā'.

Subsequently, Hāfiz Hidāyat Husayn Sāhib, a member of the Council and the approver of the draft wrote a letter, the crux of which was that he would like to come to Thānah Bhawan on a certain date (most probably the 22nd of April 1934) in order to discuss the draft. It will be better if the ʿulamā' of Deoband and Sahāranpūr also attend.

On the appointed date, Hāfiz Hidāyat Husayn arrived with Nawāb Jamshed ʿAlī Sāhib – a member of the Council – Hājī Wajīh ad-Dīn Sāhib – a member of the Assembly –Hājī Rashīd Ahmad Khān Sāhib – a weapons dealer in Delhi – and a few others. Hadrat Nāzim Sāhib, Maulānā Zakarīyyā Sāhib and others arrived from Deoband. A detailed discussion of about five hours followed. Hāfiz Sāhib accepted some of the corrections, apologized for not being able to accept some, and promised to think over the others. Another meeting was held in Deoband on the 11th of Muharram. In addition to the ʿulamā' of Sahāranpūr and Thānah Bhawan, Maulānā Kifāyatullāh Sāhib was also invited to attend. The Maulānā attended together with Janāb Maulānā Hifz ar-Rahmān Sāhib. A few more changes with regard to the draft were unanimously made, and sent to the Council as an appendix to the previous assessment. As was done previously, the appendix was signed by 30 ʿulamā' and Hadrat Wālā.

The entire assessment was then published and printed. Together with fulfilling the role of a true leader on this issue, Hadrat Wālā contributed to one third of the expenses. The remaining two thirds were arranged by Deoband and Sahāranpūr – one third each. Although all these efforts did not bear fruit as they ought to, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the non-Sharīʿah-compliant draft was restricted to a great extent. Duʿā' was made daily in the Khānqāh that the un-Islamic draft legislation with regard to endowments must be rejected, and the draft which is in line with the Sharīʿah must be accepted. May Allāh *taʿālā* fulfil our wishes as soon as possible. Āmīn.

Note: After Hadrat Wālā had a discussion with the delegation which is mentioned at the beginning of this incident, Maulwī Jalīl Ahmad Sāhib ʿAlīgarhī had noted the gist of some of its aspects. The conversation is filled with very beneficial and erudite principles. It is therefore quoted below.

It was most probably in 1930 when Nawāb Sāhib came with a few senior lawyers and distinguished leaders as part of a

formal governmental delegation, and presented themselves before Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat. The head of the delegation was Hāfiz Hidāyat Husayn Sāhib Marhūm Kānpūrī. The purpose of this delegation was to engage in Sharʿī investigations with Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat with regard to endowments. In other words, they wanted to ascertain whether it was permissible for a non-Muslim government to interfere in the administrative affairs of the endowments of Muslims. Once the date of their arrival was learnt, Hadrat Wālā sent Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib (who was the head of the town and Hadrat Wālā's nephew) to the station to welcome the delegation. Arrangements for the delegation's stay were also made by Hadrat Wālā and it was decided that they would be housed in the house of Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib.

Before its arrival in Thānah Bhawan, this delegation had sent almost 100 questions via post to Hadrat Wālā and requested his replies to them. However, due to his many engagements, Hadrat Wālā could not even have a look at the questions. When the delegation reached Thānah Bhawan, Hadrat Wālā personally went to the house where they were staying in order to converse with them. He did this so that they are not inconvenienced into coming to meet him. After meeting them, he noted a few principles on a large piece of paper and handed it over to Hāfiz Hidāyat Husayn Sāhib Kānpūrī, a barrister and the head of this delegation. He requested him to read the entire note before the rest of the delegation because the discussions will hover around these principles. The principles are as follows:

1. An endowment is a monetary worship and it is purely a worship. It is just like paying zakāh which is a monetary worship and purely a worship. *Radd al-Muhtār* the commentary of *ad-Durr al-Mukhtār* states:

وكذا على العتق والوقف والأضحية الخ

2. Although the benefit of an endowment sometimes goes to people when a share is apportioned to them, the endowment will still remain a pure worship. It will not be a dealing. Zakāh is purely for the benefit of people, it cannot be spent on other recipients like masājid, etc. On the other hand, an endowment can be spent on recipients if the endower makes such a condition. This shows that although zakāh – in comparison to

an endowment - has more to do with the benefit of people, it has an element of a dealing. Thus, an endowment is more of a pure worship as compared to zakāh.

3. Since an endowment is similar to zakah – in fact, more – as regards being a pure worship, the presence of any defect in it will be akin to a defect in zakāh. For the government to interfere in an effort to rectify an endowment is similar to its interference in trying to rectify zakāh.

4. Interfering in the matter of zakāh in this way certainly entails interference in religion. Similarly, interference in the matter of endowments will be interference in religion irrespective of whether the interference is of one's own accord or on the request of someone. As for the question: How can the harms that have crept into endowments be put to an end, it is similar to asking: If a person is found deficient in salāh, fasting, hajj or zakāh, how can we put an end to it? When replying to this question, can a person suggest that the government has the right to stipulate fines, [penalties] and so on to redress these harms? Certainly not. Rather, the Muslims can themselves do it either by teaching and convincing them [those who are committing the wrongs] or by removing them from the office of guardianship [over the endowments]. When the endower has given them such rights – whether he severs ties with them or not – it will certainly be his fault. Even then the government does not have any right to interfere.

Note: The questions which were posed about the supervision of endowments were based on the assumption that an endowment is not act of worship. Since it has been established that it is an act of worship, there is no room for these questions. This is why there is no need to answer them.

The following are the principles laid down for the investigation of rulings.

1. I am ready to give answers to the rulings but I excuse myself from giving any advice because I have no affinity with this.

2. There will be certain rulings which I will not recall at the exact time of the discussion. I excuse myself from giving an answer to them. However, if they are noted and given to me, I will refer to the books and be able to give an answer.

3. If there are any misgivings and doubts about the rulings, it is not our responsibility to give an answer to them because we do not lay down the rulings, we merely transcribe and convey them. This is also the case when it comes to the laws of the land. If there is any doubt or misgiving, its answer is the responsibility of the law-making committee [or ministry] and not of the judge or lawyer.

H̲āfiz̲ S̲āh̲ib began to read out the principles to all who were in attendance, but because they contained some technical words related to the sciences, he was hesitant in reading them. H̲ad̲rat Wālā could not tolerate his difficulty, so he said to him: These are just a few notes which I made reference to. Give it to me and I will read it to everyone; this will be much easier because I will explain as I read along. In this way they will all find it easy to understand. The H̲āfiz̲ S̲āh̲ib handed over the note to H̲ad̲rat Wālā most happily who then read it to them and explained it as he went along.

A well-known Barrister at Law was appointed to speak on behalf of the delegation. He was considered to be a master at cross examination and was referred to as a king of cross examination.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā also used to say: "He is a very intelligent person and posed very penetrating questions to me. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I was able to answer them all in a few words. Consequently, our entire discussion was completed in half an hour and convincing answers were given to all his questions."

The nature of the discussion with the delegation is described briefly below. I was not personally in the meeting, so I obtained the facts from others and noted the gist. Members of the delegation also went to other places to investigate the issue but they received half answers from most of them. In other words, it is permissible for the government to interfere in the administration of endowments under certain conditions. However, H̲ad̲rat Wālā clearly said to them that because this is a religious act, to give any power to a non-Muslim in it amounts to interference in religious issues, and requesting interference in religious issues or trying to gain some sort of foothold in it would be an obvious crime. For example, s̲alāh is a purely religious act. It is in no way permissible to appoint a non-Muslim to interfere with it.

Similarly, it will not be permissible to request a non-Muslim to interfere or to make any effort which would give a non-Muslim the right to make decisions in the administration of endowments. The Barrister Sāhib said in reply to this: "Pardon me, but there is a difference between salāh and an endowment because salāh does not have anything to do with wealth, while an endowment is a monetary issue. Since the condition of trustees of endowments is presently bad, they are committing many malpractices in the endowments. The income is not spent on the eligible recipients; they [trustees] are devouring it themselves." Hadrat Wālā replied: "Very well, if you consider the example of salāh to be incorrect, take zakāh as an example. It is also a purely religious act and is a monetary issue as well. There are many Muslims who do not pay their zakāh. However, since it is a religious act, a non-Muslim can in no way interfere with it."

The Barrister Sāhib asked: "Is marriage and divorce also a purely religious act?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Yes." He said: "Very well. A man divorced his wife. The woman wishes to separate herself from him but he does not permit her to leave. He refuses her to go and denies he issued a divorce. In such a case, will it not be permissible to seek help from a court, prove the divorce through testimony, and obtain the help of the government to gain her freedom? You see, marriage and divorce are religious acts, but it became permissible for a non-Muslim to interfere."

Hadrat Wālā said: "Think carefully. There are two separate issues, one is the occurrence of divorce and the other is the effect of divorce. In other words, the right which the woman obtained on account of her husband divorcing her and which the man wants to usurp. It is harmful to the woman. The woman does not intentionally want any interference from the government as regards the divorce, rather the right of freedom which she obtained because of the divorce. If she cannot exercise this right, it would be harmful to her. The woman wants the help of the court to repulse the harm."

The Barrister Sāhib said: "Pardon me, but we can say the same thing here. Just as harm is caused to the woman, malpractices in the endowments is harmful to the poor. Just as it has been permitted for a non-Muslim to interfere there in order to save [the woman] from harm, it ought to be permissible for non-

Muslims to interfere in this case in order to save [the poor] from the harms of the endowments.

Hadrat Wālā said: "You did not ponder carefully. There, the harm to the woman is due to the husband restraining her, here the malpractice of the trustee is not harmful to the poor, but only devoid of benefit. Harm is one thing, and absence of benefit is something else. Try to understand this through an example: You had a 100-rupee note in your pocket. A person took it away from you. This is considered to be a harm. On the other hand, if I want to give you a 100-rupee note, but someone stops me from giving it to you, it was of no harm to you; it was merely not to your benefit." On hearing this, all who were present spontaneously responded by saying: "*Subhānallāh* and *Salle ʿalā*."[1] The Barrister Sāhib fell silent, did not present any other objection, but continued smiling.

Hadrat Wālā related to us later on: "Before the meeting, I had presented this argument to my friends and asked them: 'If such an objection is made, what reply can we give?' No one could come up with an answer. When I was having my discussion with the delegation and the Barrister Sāhib made this objection, Allāh *taʿālā* instilled the answer in my heart there and then." Hadrat Wālā added: "They then left happily from here and were relating to others: 'Some people gave us very dry answers which offended us severely. But the benefits and sciences which we learnt on coming here were not learnt anywhere else.' They also said: 'We have already decided that we will come here [Thānah Bhawan] periodically in order to derive benefit from him.'" When they were departing, Hadrat Wālā accompanied them to the station to bid them farewell, and said to them: "When you arrived, I did not come to meet you at the station because it would have meant that I came because of your authority and position. But now I accompanied you to the station out of love."

Independence And Soft-Heartedness

Hadrat Wālā says this very often: "By virtue of the focus of the Majdhūb Sāhib through whose duʿā' I was born, I do not have such an attachment with any person to the extent that my

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[1] Glory to Allāh and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

heart becomes stuck with that person. Although I have intense love for my associates and beloveds, I am neither stressed by their separation nor are my thoughts attached to them. Yes, when they are separated from me, I do experience some sorrow and then it is over. However, I cannot bear to see anyone in discomfort. My heart is reduced to bits in such cases." On the same subject Hadrat Wālā occasionally says jokingly: "I had drunk the milk of a merciless woman. Since my foster-mother was pitiless, this probably had an effect on me. Nonetheless – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – there is heat in my heart, but not hardness. There is sharpness in my temperament, but no harshness."

Attention To Dīn And Observation Of Rights

A student asked the following question to Hadrat Wālā: "My deceased father had two wives but never paid the dowry to either one." It was a practice not to pay dowry. In fact, women generally considered it bad to ask for the dowry. The student asked: "Is it obligatory to pay the dowry from the deceased's estate?" Hadrat Wālā's mind immediately went to his own situation and thought to himself: My deceased father had also entered into four marriages one after the other. We do not know whether he paid the dowry, he was pardoned [by his wives] from paying them or if anyone thought of paying it from the estate. Hadrat Wālā was most grateful to the student for causing him to think of something which he had not considered for such a long time. He then devoted himself in trying to fulfil the dues. He sent questions to other ʿulamā' because he considered it unethical to practise on his own fatwā for his own affairs. Due to the prevailing practices with regard to dowry, most of the ʿulamā' issued a fatwā that it is not obligatory to pay the dowry from the estate. Despite this, because the prevalence of this custom was not definitive, Hadrat Wālā felt that caution demands on him to pay the heirs of his father's four wives from his own share according to the percentage which he received.

He made full efforts to ascertain the heirs who were spread out in far-off places, in fact in other countries. It took him about two years to complete his findings. He sent pre-paid letters, made inquiries about the relatives, inquired about the names and addresses of all who were eligible [for the money], and even sent an ʿālim to certain places to establish the heirs. He then

allotted their shares as laid down in the inheritance laws. The allotting of shares was a long drawn out process and it was not Hadrat Wālā's practice to take such work from anyone without paying the person for his services. He therefore spent about 15 rupees to this end and a long time passed in this regard. A lot of time had to be spent in the distribution as well because some people were to receive just one anna[1], and in some cases just one paisa[2]. Some of them were quite wealthy and he felt extremely hesitant in having to give them just one anna. However, since it was obligatory to pay, he wrote to them saying: "I will be most grateful if you help me in the fulfilment of all dues." They accepted very happily'

Although some of them claimed very large sums and presented them to Hadrat Wālā, he had already made the intention that no matter how big the amount he has to pay, he will pay it even if his entire life goes in fulfilling it. (The dowry of each wife was 5 000 rupees and Hadrat Wālā had to pay a little over 1 000 rupees). After paying off all the amounts, Hadrat Wālā said: "Although it was a very difficult affair, Allāh *taʿālā* steered me in such a way that I was able to pay off everything without any real stress."

I [the compiler] say: Just this one incident is sufficient to demonstrate Hadrat Wālā's integrity because rarely would you find anyone in his time who bothers about such matters – especially when so much of difficulties and fatigue have to be borne.

Safeguarding Of Limits

A scholar wrote two books against the Najdīs[3] and had them printed. He used very harsh words in his reference to them and even went to the extent of referring to them as filth. The scholar sent these books with a few others for Hadrat Wālā's perusal. Hadrat Wālā wrote back frankly to him: "I firmly expect the books which you sent to be of benefit to me, but there are just two from whose benefit I will most probably be deprived. These two are the ones which are written about the Najdīs. Bearing in

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[1] 16th part of a rupee.
[2] A copper coin equal to one quarter of an anna.
[3] Those who come from the Najd province of Saudi Arabia. They are also known as Wahhābīs.

mind that there are no means of ascertaining whether they are in line with us or not, my approach with regard to them is one of silence. Furthermore, I do not have any Sharʿī facts about the two books, so I will remain silent about them as well. However, I do know about some of their [Najdīs'] issues and I differ strongly with them. For example, their excesses as regards the meaning of polytheism, their beliefs with regard to tawassul[1], their extremism on the issue of shadd-e-riḫāl[2] or considering three divorces to be one. Despite my differences with them on these issues, I do not use harsh words in their refutation."

After relating the above episode to us, Ḫaḏrat Wālā said: "Our difficulty is that we cannot say something openly because we remain within the limits. This is why we cannot even say anything against those who hold views which are different to ours. A person asked me about the Najdīs so I expressed the facts which were known to me. he said: 'They are Najdīs, they are not wajdīs[3].' Whereas there is also a severe need for a person to be a wajdī."

He said on another occasion: "What can we say to others? Nowadays even some of those who are on the truth do not consider the limits in their refutation of bidʿah. Bidʿah must be prohibited in accordance with the type of bidʿah, e.g. whether it is creedal or practical, ijtihādī or non-ijtihādī, and so on. Why should the limits be transgressed?"

Caution

Prerequisites for women to correspond with him

It is Ḫaḏrat Wālā's practice that when a married woman writes a letter to him she must get it signed by her husband or another maḫram. In the presence of the husband, the signature of a maḫram is not considered to be sufficient. This prerequisite is laid down so that in the case where there are differences in inclinations between husband and wife, it must

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[1] Tawassul: To use or mention a person as a means especially when making duʿā'. For example, mentioning the name of Rasūlullāh *s̠allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as a means for the acceptance of duʿā'.
[2] Undertaking a special journey to visit a masjid.
[3] A wajdī is a person who is overcome by his emotions and goes into a trance-like state.

not lead to disputes and fights. The husband must not have the occasion to ask: "Why did you write to him?" Hadrat Wālā constantly says: "I consider it more essential for husband and wife to maintain a harmonious relationship than to correspond with me." This practice of Hadrat Wālā puts an end to many harms and it is a practical tutoring of women to be cautious with non-mahrams. He also dislikes women undertaking a journey for the sake of bay'ah. He accepts bay'ah through correspondence. When conversing with women, he seats the mahram near him.

The harms of appointing an assistant

Due to his many engagements and physical weakness, Hadrat Wālā has been perceiving since some time the dire need for an assistant to carry out certain tasks. In addition to carrying out miscellaneous tasks for Hadrat Wālā, he would deal with new arrivals who cause a lot of stress to Hadrat Wālā because of their uncultured ways and unprincipled practices. In this way, he will assist Hadrat Wālā in being free of these people. The need for such an assistant can be easily gauged by a person who observes Hadrat Wālā's many engagements and the uncouth behaviour of new arrivals. However, Hadrat Wālā cannot put up with such an assistant solely because the latter will feel inflated, will consider himself to be a close associate of Hadrat Wālā and people will suffer many hardships because of him. He will make demands on the people, people will feel that because he is close to Hadrat Wālā, they will make him an intermediary for their needs and requests, and also serve him [the assistant] in order to win him over. The last is the root of all harms.

Hadrat Wālā says: "I can tolerate all hardships, but I can never tolerate this [where efforts are made to win over the assistant through flattery]. It will cause Dīnī harm to him and be discomforting to the people." He also says: "Leave aside others, Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* had an attendant. Although he was an ordinary person, he was considered to be a special attendant. He used to make requests to me, and that too for expensive items. And not only in Gangoh, but he used to come here to Thānah Bhawan to ask me. Since the dog at the threshold of one's beloved is also beloved, I used to fulfil his requests. He was indeed observant of tahajjud salāh, dhikr and other spiritual practices. However, he had this illness which

developed because of his close proximity [with Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*]. Similarly, Hājī ʻĀbid Husayn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had a close associate. A person wanted to meet Hājī Sāhib, so the associate said: 'Give me one rupee and I will organize for you to meet him.' This person came personally to me and said: 'You have an excellent rule here, you have no obstacles. Anyone can come directly to you.' Based on these experiences, I have not appointed any close attendant or intermediary. There is a lot of safety and many advantages in this."

Supervision of workers

Hadrat Wālā strictly forbids his workers from accepting any gifts from anyone. It is even more forbidden for them to make any requests to anyone. Those who bring gifts are also prohibited from giving anything to the workers. If anyone persists in this regard, Hadrat Wālā says to him: "If you want to give anything, you must give it via me. I will personally convey it to him on the pretext of need but I will not disclose your name. If not, these workers will serve those who give them or those from whom they expect to receive gifts. As for those who do not give them anything, they will disregard them totally. Furthermore, the workers' intention will remain corrupt and they will expect to receive something from every person. In short, there are many harms and disadvantages."

Note: Later on – on the insistence of relatives and attendants – a doorman was appointed (details in this regard were given previously under the chapter on practices). However, he used to very observant over the doorman so that he does not do anything inappropriate. Since Hadrat Wālā is extremely vigilant on matters of this nature, no one has the courage to commit any offence in this regard.

Evaluation of a book

Letter dated 5 Ramadān al-Mubārak 1353 A.H.

The great teacher and erudite scholar Maulānā Ashraf ʻAlī, may Allāh perpetuate his greatness.

As-salāmu ʻalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

We are sending to your respected self a copy of *Matlaʻ al-Anwār*, written by ʻAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Rukn ad-Dīn *rahimahullāh* which is a biography of Shaykh al-Islam Maulānā

Anwārullāh Khān Fadīlat Jang *rahimahullāh*, in order to ascertain your view on this book. We hope that your respected self will apprise the Student's Union (ex-students of Madrasah Nizāmīyyah, Hyderabad Deccan) of your views. We will be most grateful to you.

This insignificant fellow, Abul Khayr.

Note: In this biography, the deceased was praised for popularizing some of the practices of the latter Sufis.

Reply:

From this insignificant person, Ashraf ʿAlī, may Allāh pardon him.

To the accumulator of virtues. May his kindnesses perpetuate.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

I do not have a lot of time. As per the following couplet, I was able to illuminate myself from different sections of *Matlaʿ al-Anwār*.

> A single strand of hair from your hair-lock is like a mandate for me. Leave aside desire, the fragrance is a mandate for me.

Hadrat Maulānā was my Pīr Bhāi and also my "elder brother". Bearing in mind that he was my elder, it is essential for me to accord him respect. Since he was like a brother, I also have the permission to be informal with him. I am presenting my view based on the above two points. My view combines respect with informality. The book is worthy of emulation. However, I feel it will be most cautious to exclude sections which contain rulings which will be contentious for some people to hold such views and for all people to practise on them. It is not far-fetched to assume that had Hadrat *rahimahullāh* come to know of my view, then even if he did not consider me to be correct, he would certainly have excused me. I make a sincere supplication for Hadrat *rahimahullāh* and all who are affiliated to Hadrat's group. "O Allāh! You be theirs and make them Yours." I request you to make the same supplication for me.

MISCELLANEOUS ASPECTS OF THE BIOGRAPHY

Part One: Fragments From The Biography

Prelude: The Purpose Of This Chapter

This chapter has been set up to include those aspects of Hadrat Wālā's biography which were recalled after the writing of the previous chapters, which we came across from his writings, or which – due to their two-dimensional theme – we could not decide with certainty in which chapter they should be included. These will be included in the present chapter without adhering to any headings. Since such conditions, incidents and statements – both old and new – will continue to be gleaned after the compilation of this biography, Allāh willing I will continue adding to this chapter for as long as I am living.

Principles For The Arrangement Of This Chapter

I will continue collating such miscellaneous themes and – Allāh willing – will print them periodically in parts under the title *Shadharāt as-Sawānih* (fragments from the biography). This is why the sub-heading states "Part One". When I collate a considerable number of fragments, I will publish them under the title "Part Two of The Fragments From The Biography". This series will continue for as long as Allāh *taʿālā* wills. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain Hadrat Wālā for a long time with wellness and peace, and may He allow this series to continue forever. Āmīn.

Although these fragments will be published over several parts, their sequenced number will not be separate but continuous. I now commence with the fragments. Help is sought from Allāh *taʿālā* alone and we rely solely on Him.

1st Fragment: Hastiness Is Not Good In Bay'ah

Hadrat Wālā wrote in reply to a student's request for bayʿah: "Hastiness is not good in bayʿah. The work [of rectification] must start first. Commence with *Qasd as-Sabīl* and continue informing me of your conditions so that the programme of instruction may continue. Once mutual affinity is established, there will be no objection to making a request for bayʿah."

2nd Fragment: A Few Replies To The Compiler's Letters

Incidentally I found several very old letters belonging to me. Some of their themes which are of general benefit are quoted briefly together with Hadrat Wālā's replies.

Theme: Sometimes I feel my thoughts and whisperings comprise absolute unbelief (Allāh forbid) and I therefore become extremely despondent and dejected.

Reply: Let alone unbelief, they are not even sins. Do not fear in the least. There is no accountability whatsoever on whisperings. Instead, they entail some sort of striving through which proximity [to Allāh] increases. Satan does not know this secret or else he would never cast any whisperings.

Theme: I had added such and such forms of dhikr without obtaining Hadrat Wālā's permission. This is why I stopped them all entirely. In fact, they became cast aside on their own. I will now adopt a practice as prescribed by Hadrat Wālā.

Reply: I permit you with all forms of dhikr and spiritual practices, but bear in mind your courage and expectation of continuity.

Theme: Hadrat, kindly prescribe whatever forms of dhikr, wazā'if, spiritual practices and meditations which Hadrat Wālā feels are appropriate to my condition. Kindly give me a written permission so that I could adhere to them diligently, and – as far as possible – I never make any additions or subtractions to them.

Reply: Commence by gauging your condition from *Qasd as-Sabīl*. That is in itself a written permission for you.

Theme: When a person imagines that the word "Allāh" is written on his heart with liquid silver, how should he imagine it and in what form? In other words, in which place in the heart, in what shape, how big, in how large and bright letters should the word "Allāh" be imagined?

Reply: There is no need for a detailed imagination. A mere superficial imagination which is realized without any formalities is enough.

Theme: Through Hadrat Wālā and by the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā* I sometimes experience presence of heart in my salāh. I am starting to become conscious of Allāh's presence. I do not know

whether this is merely my imagination or it is a really praiseworthy condition.

Reply: Congratulations. It is an extremely praiseworthy condition.

Theme: Nowadays I am not perceiving that presence with Allāh *taʿālā*. I am thinking, could it not be caused by a mental weakness? The reason why I am saying this is that the day I do not get my full quota of sleep and dryness overwhelms my brain, my power of imagination increases considerably on that day.

Reply: Māshā Allāh it is a good condition. The increase due to the overwhelming of the dryness does not necessarily mean that the dryness has something to do with the original condition. If the original condition was not there from before hand, where would the increase in the dryness have come from? Just as original love is in the heart and increases with new bounties, does it necessarily mean that the original love is really from this bounty? Or can one suspect that love to be weak? The Qur'ān states that the īmān of the believers increases when Allāh's verses are revealed. In fact, it even increases when calamities descend. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَلَّذِيْنَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ اِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوْا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ اِيْمَانًا

Those to whom the people said: "The people [residents of Makkah] have gathered equipment to confront you, therefore fear them!" But their īmān increased further."[1]

Theme: I do not even feel sorrowful when I think about the theft which took place. Does this not entail ingratitude to Allāh's bounties.

Reply: I was saddened at hearing about the theft which Hakīm Sāhib related to me, and am also happy to hear about your independence. The possibility of ingratitude is strange. Ingratitude is blameworthy when it stems from an absence of a bond with the benefactor [Allāh *taʿālā* in this case]. As for what stems from a deep bond with the benefactor, it is praiseworthy. Although it may be referred to as ingratitude, it will not be in reality, even if it is in form.

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 173.

3rd Fragment: The Compiler's Father Pledges Bay'ah To Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

My respected deceased father had the honour of pledging bayʿah to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* via a letter dated 14 Dhū al-Hijjah 1316 A.H. It is quoted here verbatim as a source of blessings. The objective of quoting it here follows.

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> From this insignificant servant, Muhammad Imdādullāh, may Allāh pardon him. After extending the salām to you, my beloved Maulwī Muhammad ʿAzīzullāh Sāhib, I inform you that I received your letter. I have admitted you into the bayʿat-e-ʿUthmānī. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with His love. The different forms of dhikr which will be appropriate to your situation will be taught to you by Maulwī Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib. I am praying for you. Allāh *taʿālā* is all-hearing and He accepts supplications. Was salām. That is all.
>
> The weak servant, Muhammad Imdādullāh, may Allāh pardon him.
>
> 14 Dhū al-Hijjah 1316 A.H.

Acting under the advice of his mentor, Hadrat Wālā noted a few teachings on a piece of paper and gave them to my father. This was about 28 years ago. The note is quoted verbatim so that the reader may gauge how systematic and firm Hadrat Wālā was from the very beginning, and what a short but comprehensive and all-inclusive programme he laid down. The note is as follows:

Dhikr

> Sit in solitude while in a state of wudū' and face the qiblah. Repeat the name of Allāh at least 3 000 times. You may increase the number as much as you like depending on the time you have.

Spiritual Practices

> With the previously-mentioned conditions of wudū' and facing the qiblah, imagine that the word "Allāh" is imprinted on your heart with liquid silver, and remain immersed in this imagination.

Meditation

With the previously-mentioned conditions, first repeat the following verse 3-4 times:

اَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَرٰى

Does he not know that Allāh is watching him?

Then immerse yourself in the meaning of this verse and have full conviction that Allāh *taʿālā* is fully aware of and watching your internal and external selves.

A Treatment For Thoughts

Do not make a wilful attempt to repulse them. They will be repulsed when you focus more on the task at hand.

Shajaratul Murād

I sent the above-quoted note to Hadrat Wālā after my father passed away. Hadrat Wālā sent it back saying: "Now make your teachings into your practices." Even before the incident of the above note, Hadrat Wālā made a statement in the form of a table, which is titled *Shajaratul Murād*. This was around the year 1312 A.H. Hadrat Wālā's erudition – which Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed him with from the very beginning - is clearly demonstrated from this table. It is quoted verbatim from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.

A statement of Hadrat Wālā, titled *al-Murād* (noted by Maulwī Is-hāq ʿAlī Sāhib Kānpūrī, around the year 1312 A.H.). It is quoted because of its usefulness and comprehensiveness.

One day my mentor, Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī invited some special friends over to his house and explained the essence of sulūk. I was also present in the course of the explanation. For the purpose of brevity, it is explained as follows:

Note: Hadrat Wālā simplified it further by making a few changes to it.[1]

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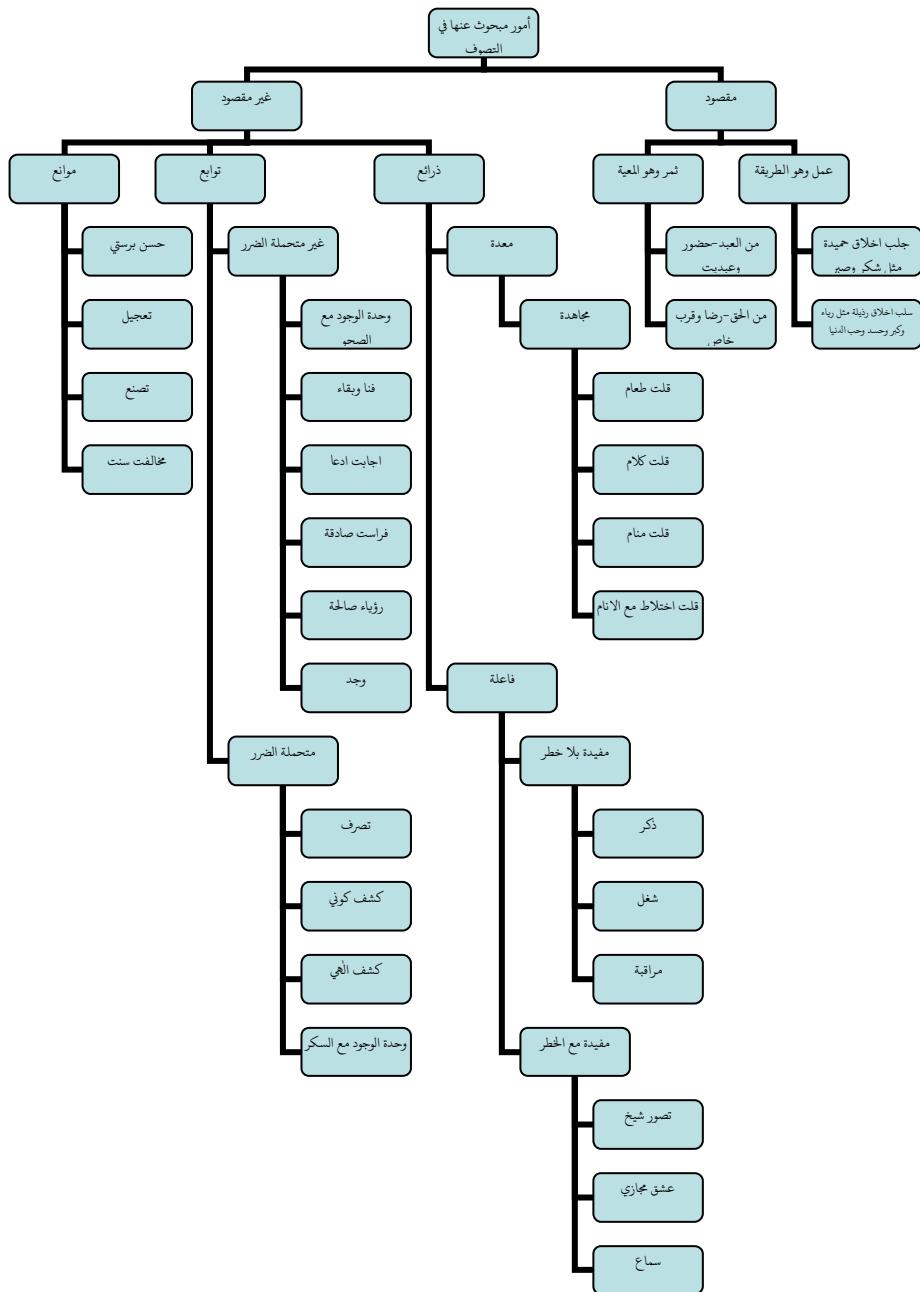
[1] The table has not been translated. Please refer to a qualified shaykh for an explanation. (translator)

I made mention of this table and some of his other old writings to Hadrat Wālā himself and said: "Hadrat Wālā's old and new writings and investigations are very similar and it seems as if there is no difference between the old and the new. Allāh *taʿālā* has made Hadrat Wālā an expert scholar from the very

beginning." Hadrat Wālā replied: "Although others may not be able to discern any difference, I know that there are many differences. After exercise, a wrestler is able to feel the development of muscles in his body while others cannot make out any difference. It seems as if his body is as it always was. His body may not increase in size, but after exercising, his veins and muscles will certainly develop more strength and there is a balance in his physique which, sometimes, is not noticed by others."

Glory to Allāh! What an excellent comparison. Hadrat Wālā is also a master in making comparisons. By resorting to examples, he simplifies the most complex meanings to the extent that it is as if they are right before the eyes. Bearing in mind that examples and parables are very effective means for conveying themes and simplifying matters, this branch of knowledge is included among the sciences of prophet-hood. Some heirs of the Prophets [the 'ulamā'] were also blessed with this ability. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* and Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* are from among those personalities who where specifically blessed with this art and are considered to be the masters of comparisons.

4th Fragment: A Reply To A Poetic Letter

A seeker wrote a vague and poetic letter. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Using vague words is not enough. Write your objective clearly. There is no room for poetry and formalities here."

5th Fragment: A Student Requests Permission T Keep a Gun

A student wrote a letter in Persian in which he sought permission to keep a gun for protection. Hadrat Wālā asked: "What is the reason for asking me permission to keep a gun?" The student replied: "Before this I was under Hadrat's treatment for my illness of pride, and keeping a gun appears to be an instrument of pride." Hadrat Wālā wrote: "Possessing an instrument of something does not necessitate its act. After all, every man carries the instrument of adultery, but the severing of that instrument has not been made compulsory."

Hadrat Wālā then addressed us: "My reply is a bit obscene, but there could be no better reply. Hadrat Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* extracted very beneficial lessons from some of the most obscene stories. Since the hearts of these personalities

are pure, and there is informality and simplicity in their temperaments, they do not hesitate in saying such things.”

6th Fragment: A Reply To A Son’s Letter

A blessed and senior Sufi, Hadrat Maulānā Ghulām Muhammad Sāhib Dīnpūrī *rahimahullāh* passed away. The sorrow over his demise was conveyed to Hadrat Wālā by the deceased’s son. Hadrat Wālā wrote back: “I had already experienced sorrow when I read about his demise in the newspaper. My sorrow is now renewed. I pray for patience and toleration for you people, and for the elevation in ranks and continuation of blessings for the deceased.”

The son had included in the same letter: “A few years ago, Hadrat Wālā had become angry with me on the issue of writing and corresponding [with you]. I request your pardon.” Hadrat Wālā wrote a soft reply to this as well. He then addressed those who were present and said: “He is presently afflicted and heart-broken. The normal principled reply must not be given to him now.” Subsequently, Hadrat Wālā wrote: “How can a person be angry with those who are loyal to him?! Consider it to be something to be proud about and do not be worried.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how Hadrat Wālā preserves the ranks of people, look at his affection, preservation of limits and consideration of circumstances and situations.

A reply to a fully referenced letter

A new seeker wrote a fully referenced letter with a request for bayʿah. Hadrat Wālā replied: “The entire letter is filled with references and proofs. I am not worthy of accepting bayʿah from erudite research scholars.”

A reply to an educated seeker

A new educated seeker who is a Maulwī in an English school wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā. The gist of his letter with Hadrat Wālā’s original replies are quoted here.

Statement:: I have been overcome by this concern for quite some time to get hold of a pious personality.

Reply: You have erred in your selection. I am merely a student, I am not a pious personality.

Statement: I read some of your printed lectures and books. These have increased my enthusiasm.

Reply: The foundation is extremely weak. An authentic book is not even proof of the authenticity of its writer, let alone being a proof of his being a reformer.

Statement: I hope Hadrat will help me.

Reply: You have to specify the meaning of this help so that I can see whether I have the ability [to help] or not.

Statement: I wear a sherwānī, shirt, a pants with a broad bottom, boots, shoes, and a Turkish hat. My beard length is presently the width of two and half fingers. I intend increasing its length.

Reply: I am very happy with your honesty. I too am resorting to the honesty which is contained in parts of your letter, and am saying: Your external self is bad while my internal self is bad. In such a situation, there is an absence of affinity. And affinity is a prerequisite for the anticipated service [which you expect from me].

Statement: If Hadrat were to focus his attention on me, my deeds will come right.

Reply: I pose the same question of being specific.

Statement: I am not worthy of having the honour of serving Hadrat.

Reply: I am prepared to serve you myself, but affinity which is a prerequisite in the path is beyond my choice.

Statement: Hadrat, please prescribe measures which will be appropriate to me.

Reply: Measures to which purpose?

Statement: Pray that I get the inspiration for good deeds.

Reply: Yes, I am ready for du‘ā’ in every condition because the acceptance of the one making du‘ā’ is not a prerequisite.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how Hadrat Wālā commenced placing the person on the path. Look at the subtle manner in which he directed his attention to rectifying his clothing and appearance. And look at the beneficial theme through which he

turned his attention to explain to him the reality of the objective!

7th Fragment: What To Do When A Task Has To Be Carried Out In The Midst of Dhikr

A seeker sent a written note in which he asked: If any task comes up in the course of engaging in dhikr, should I complete the task first so that I can then concentrate on the dhikr or should I continue with the dhikr?

Hadrat Wālā replied: If this happens occasionally then complete the task first, but if it happens often, continue with the dhikr.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a principled and judicious course of action!

Treatment of a strange worry of a seeker

A seeker wrote: When anyone comes solely to meet me, I experience a severe restlessness. If the person is a wealthy man, I impose on myself to sit with him. If he is not a wealthy person, I am unable to impose on myself. When I think to myself that I ought to treat everyone equally, that I should not cast aside a poor person while I sit with a wealthy person, then my self says to me: The wealthy come very rarely. On the other hand, if the poor people were to see you giving a lot of attention to them, it will be difficult to be free of them totally.

Hadrat Wālā wrote back: This discrimination is incorrect because even if a poor person comes on rare occasions, the discrimination demands that you must accommodate him as well. Whereas this is not your practice. The discrimination is therefore incorrect. However, the correct "discrimination" will be to accommodate both, but the nature of accommodation will differ with each person, depending on his condition, temperament and habits. In other words, the condition, temperament and habits of wealthy people on the whole is that as long as a lot of attention is not paid to them, they are not pleased. On the other hand, the poor are happy with just a little attention. Therefore, having a difference in accommodating them is not blameworthy. However, the poor should not be asked to leave. You must either make an excuse and get up from there yourself or ask them to leave in a very polite manner. For example, you can say to them: "This is the

time for my rest or work, you too should take a rest now.” Or anything similar.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how Hadrat Wālā safeguards the limits, takes emotions into consideration and how well he tutors and trains!

Seekers are warned against a certain illness

Hadrat Wālā wrote to another seeker: Giving up work, laziness and uselessness must not be considered to be servitude. Movement in actions is essential in servitude.

وهذا مزلة أقدام كثير من أهل الطريق حتى وقعوا في ورطة الجبر والإلحاد، زعما منهم بأنهم أطوع العباد.

This is where many people slip on the path to the extent that they fall into the pit of fatalism and atheism on the assumption that they are the most obedient servants.

8th Fragment: A Prescription For Acquiring Knowledge And Practice

Hadrat Wālā said: If you have confidence in the one who is saying this to you and you have intelligence, Allāh’s path is so clear and simple that you can understand it in just ten minutes. Whatever delay and difficulty there is, it is in action, and that too in making the actions firm. As for the difficulty which is experienced at the exact time of the action, e.g. you are feeling sleepy and you have to perform salāh. You will certainly find it difficult at such a time. But if you bear it, then immediately after performing your salāh you will experience such comfort that – glory to Allāh – it will be a recompense for all the difficulty which you experienced.

9th Fragment: Testimonies Of A Few Elders In Favour of Hadrat Wālā

Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib, the nephew of Hadrat Wālā had pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh* and is also a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā. He had heard testimonies of certain elders in favour of Hadrat Wālā. I requested him to pen them. He acceded to my request and gave the note to me. I am quoting it verbatim.

The testimony of Maulānā Muhammad Yahyā

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yahyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* (who was the special attendant and khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*) replied to this question of mine on one occasion: "At present who is the Mujaddid of this century?" He replied: "I think it is your maternal uncle (referring to Hadrat Wālā). I think he is the Mujaddid of this century because a prerequisite for a Mujaddid is that his teachings and blessings must cover a major portion of the century. Another prerequisite for revival is that everyone – the masses and the elite – must derive immense benefit from him. The Maulānā's [Hadrat Wālā's] teachings and blessings extend to all sections of the community and there is hope that they will fill a major portion of this century." (Or he said similar words. May Allāh *taʿālā* immerse him in His mercy and pleasure).

Note: I [the compiler] say: When Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Raushan Khān Sāhib Murādābādī *rahimahullāh*, a khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, was on his deathbed, he said in my very presence to Hadrat Wālā with genuine emotion: "Allāh *taʿālā* appointed you as the Mujaddid of this century. May Allāh illuminate the world through your blessings, and may He completely uproot baseless customs and innovations through you."

At this point, I recall the statement of a scholar: "In the first thousand years, there used to be Mujaddids in different countries. But since the beginning of the second thousand years, they are coming from India." This scholar had made this statement before a scholar of Madīnah when the latter had said: "Muslims from all countries come here [in Madīnah]. However, I do not see the religiosity in the 'ulamā' and masses of other countries as much as I see in the 'ulamā' and masses of India."

The reason for this is as mentioned by this scholar of Madīnah. It is really true that the first Mujaddid of the second thousand years was Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh*. This was followed by Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh *rahimahullāh*, the third was Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Sāhib Barelwī[1] *rahimahullāh* and

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[1] More popularly known as Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd *rahimahullāh*. (translator)

the fourth is now Hadrat Wālā as affirmed by the elders. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

The testimony of Maulānā Muhibb ad-Dīn

When I was honoured with my first hajj journey, I was sitting in the Haram Sharīf with Hadrat Maulānā Muhibb ad-Dīn Sāhib Wilāyatī *rahimahullāh* (a khalīfah of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, a man of expositions and an elder who had emigrated to Makkah). He himself began speaking about the stations and ranks of the Imdādīyyah spiritual family. He said with reference to Hadrat Wālā: "The Maulānā is presently on the station of knowledge. When an ʿārif reaches such a station, he receives a large share of divinely inspired sciences. This is why I am extremely desirous of studying the Maulānā's *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān*."

The testimony of Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib

When Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* used to see any writing wherein Hadrat [Wālā's] name is mentioned, and the words Hakīm al-Ummah were not added to it, he would become extremely displeased and say: "'When Allāh *taʿālā* has placed a title in the hearts of people for him, it should not be left out because it is a mark of disrespect to Hadrat."' (Or he said something similar).

Hadrat Aqdas Sayyidī Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* used to say: "The affinity [with Allāh *taʿālā*] of our Maulānā Thānwī spreads profusely when he is delivering a lecture. This is why the ummah does not derive as much benefit from the lectures of anyone as much as it derives from the lectures of Maulānā." He also used to say: "For a person to deliver a lecture in the Maulānā's presence is tantamount to making a face." That is all.

The written note of Janāb Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib ends here.

10th Fragment: A Reply To A Letter Concerning Powers Of The Self

A seeker expressed the powers of his self and requested Hadrat Wālā to rectify them. He expressed his intense grief and sorrow for having such powers. Hadrat Wālā consoled him immediately and said that no one is free of them, not even him. It is useless to worry about their removal because they are naturally instilled. When something is in one's natural

disposition, it does not change and man is not liable to change it. This is because changing a natural disposition is not within his choice. However, acting on its demands is neither natural not without one's will. You should therefore have courage, proceed after making a wilful decision, and do not allow your self to act on the demands of those powers. As for the powers themselves, no matter how corrupt they may be, they are most certainly not worthy of any sorrow as long as you do not practise on them. In fact, they are worthy of happiness in the sense that difficulty is experienced in action. This increases the reward of the action and purifies the self. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* refers to this as follows:

> The world is like a candleholder. The room of piety is illuminated through it.

Hadrat Wālā added: A person like this can do very well in rectifying others and is able to identify the finest thieveries of the self because he has a personal experience with the ups and downs of the self.

The seeker was consoled by this explanation especially when Hadrat Wālā said that even he is not free of them. His spirits were elevated, and the natural grief and sorrow which he was experiencing because of the powers which he had within himself left him. He convinced his heart that if senior people are not free of these powers, what are we?

A statement of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib

Hadrat Wālā constantly quotes the following statement of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* with reference to reprehensible powers: "All the qualities which man is naturally disposed to are praiseworthy. However, it is reprehensible to use them in the wrong places." After quoting this statement, Hadrat Wālā used to explain it as follows: "The Sufi masters do not remove reprehensible powers nor can they be removed. Instead, they realign them. For example, if a railway engine is moving in the wrong direction, the steam which is within it will have to be maintained because the steam is in itself most useful. Yes, the engine will have to be turned around so that it moves in the right direction and reaches its destination quickly."

Reprehensible powers are not sinful

Incidentally (as it has been happening quite often in the course of writing this biography from Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā) I just happened to come across Hadrat Wālā's reply to a seeker's letter on the subject of reprehensible powers not being sinful or not to be frowned upon. He said: "Anger is not within one's choice. When any sin or disliked act is committed while in the state of anger, then once the anger subsides, the person must think about it and proceed in an appropriate and balanced manner."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the scholarship, the steps to be taken, and the balance. The person was not asked to wait until the anger disappears completely. Instead, the only condition was that it must subside slightly. If not, imposing times and the difficulty of waiting would have made it difficult to practise on this procedure. Furthermore, a suitable and balanced course of action was permitted with regard to the thing over which the person had become angry. However, together with this, he was asked to think about the matter because without thinking about it, a suitable and balanced course of action can never come to the mind. This is especially so now when some traces of the anger are still present. In addition to this, Hadrat Wālā did not suffice with saying that it was not a sin but that it was not even a defect. He did this so that the person may experience a rational satisfaction together with a natural satisfaction, and no sort of sorrow remains. By adding "not within one's choice", he proved that all this is not a mere child-like consolation but the reality.

In short, in such a concise and simple statement, he added small words at every step of the way and turned the reply into a perfect and scholarly statement which takes everything into consideration – the Sharīʿah, the reality, natural temperament and prudence. The astonishing thing about all this is that a comprehensive and complete reply is given spontaneously. This spontaneity is not restricted to this one letter but to all of Hadrat Wālā's letters. They contain extremely subtle points and considerations, and very complex facts are conveyed in simple and short words. They are an expression of the following couplet of Hadrat ʿĀrif Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*:

> Come and listen about the conditions of those who have the pain [of Allāh's love]. Their words are few but their meanings are many.

The above-quoted reply has not been transcribed and copied anywhere. There are countless letters of this nature in which important facts of the path are noted but their copies have not been preserved anywhere. I myself witnessed this on many occasions and was very saddened that such priceless gems are just lying hidden. Allāh willing, one example of this will be presented to the reader under fragment number 13 which is titled *Anmūdhaj al-Maktūbāt*.

Hadrat Wālā's speeches and writings

The fact of the matter is that Hadrat Wālā's writings and speeches are unparalleled in this era as regards their facts and meanings, words and power of expression, and effect and impression. If a person feels he has surpassed Hadrat Wālā in his writing acumen merely on the basis of his colloquial speech, superficial words, poetic commendations, fictional writings and novel compositions, then the following couplet most certainly applies to him:

> How can you compare an extinguished lamp to the light of the sun?!

The person who does not accept Hadrat Wālā's leadership in this field is most certainly deprived. His objection stems solely from jealousy, obstinacy, pride and arrogance, or ignorance and immaturity. It is similar to throwing soil on the light of the sun. As I myself said in a couplet:

> The spot in the heart will glitter like the sun even if thousands of sand particles are cast on it.

By Allāh, when I look at Hadrat Wālā's words and meanings, and listen to his power of speech, I am completely overwhelmed. Every writing and speech of Hadrat Wālā is absolutely free from superfluous and redundant points. They contain nothing but the core. While in the process of noting his statements, we experienced that wherever his words were found, the theme came to life. And where his words slipped from our minds, then no matter how hard we tried, we could not convey the same message.

I already believe that Hadrat Wālā's meanings [and themes] are divinely inspired. Most of his words are also divinely inspired. I recall one of my own couplets in this regard:

> These meanings, these facts, this fluency and this effect! O Majdhūb! Is this your poetry or is it divinely inspired?

Hadrat Wālā's younger brother, who is deceased, was an expert in English and was a very intelligent and gifted man. He used to say with regard to Hadrat Wālā's lectures: "When I used to listen to him, I would be left astonished as to where he used to find these words to convey his meaning!?" Hadrat Wālā's style of writing and speaking is intellectual. His lofty rank is far above adopting a colloquial style of Urdu. Hadrat Wālā himself said – and was absolutely right when he said - in reply to a person who claimed to be an Urdu writer:

> What brings pride to you is a source of blemish for us.

To expect such an erudite and learned scholar, and an exalted Sufi master to write in colloquial Urdu is similar to asking a royal falcon which is on the throne [of its king] to come down and fly like a kite and crow in the low lands.

In comparison to Arabic and Persian, Hadrat Wālā considers Urdu to be an absolutely market language. So much so that he emphasised on me that no Urdu poetry must be written in this entire book and the Urdu translation of Arabic texts must not be provided, if not, the academic status of the book will not remain. Consequently, this was abided by for some time in the beginning. However, out of consideration to my colloquial temperament and that of others like me, I could not adhere strictly to this instruction. Later on, Hadrat Wālā also felt that I was excused in this regard. The high academic disposition of Hadrat Wālā can be gauged from all this. This entire theme [on Hadrat Wālā's writings and speeches] was unintentionally written by the way in the midst of the reply to the seeker who had asked Hadrat Wālā for a treatment for anger.

A treatment for anger

Hadrat Wālā noted the reply to the letter of the above-mentioned seeker as quoted above. There was another person who pledged bay'ah to another shaykh and wrote to Hadrat

Wālā about his anger (which had caused him to feel very constricted and which he had failed to treat. He wrote in much detail and requested a treatment). Hadrat Wālā wrote the following treatment: “This condition or incident could be caused by two reasons. (1) At the time of anger you are not conscious of its consequences. (2) Despite being conscious of its consequences, you do not have the courage to control it.

If it is the first reason, then what you must do is note the warnings against unwarranted anger on a piece of paper and tie it around your forearm. The moment your eyes fall on it, you will become conscious [of the consequences]. If it is the second reason, then you must immediately separate yourself from there or have the person on whom you are angry to be moved from there. Once your temper subsides completely, you must think about the entire incident peacefully. In fact, you must consult an intelligent person and ask him for an appropriate punishment for this crime. Whatever decision you come to after thinking about the incident or after consulting someone, you must mete out the appropriate punishment to the one on whom you got angry. It must be borne in mind that in every situation you must certainly have the courage to follow a course of action. If a person does not have even this much courage, then there is no treatment for it apart for some supernatural feat which is obviously not in anyone’s control.”

I [the compiler] say: Look at how the treatment was prescribed in line with the patient. Bearing in mind that the illness was chronic, Hadrat Wālā laid down these conditions: “Once your temper subsides completely, you must think about the entire incident peacefully. In fact, you must consult an intelligent person and ask him for an appropriate punishment for this crime. Whatever decision you come to after thinking about the incident or after consulting someone, you must mete out the appropriate punishment to the one on whom you got angry.”

Another easy treatment for anger

Hadrat Wālā wrote a simple treatment for another seeker. It is quoted from *Tarbīyyatus Sālīk* for general benefit. He wrote: “To practise on the demands of one’s anger is not blameworthy on every level. However, since the permissible level is transgressed, some permissible levels are prohibited as a treatment. Based on this, a common treatment for all these situations is that a person must not utter a single word at the

time of anger. There is no harm in saying what is essential after the temper becomes completely weak. If the temper rises while speaking again, then revert to the same thing [i.e. fall absolutely silent].”

11th Fragment: A Reply To A Poetic Letter

A new seeker who was a villager, requested bayʿah in a very poetic and ceremonial manner which he wrote on a postcard and sent to Hadrat Wālā. It included sentences of this nature: “This servant has been restless since quite some time in his search for a guide. He has fallen into a deep cave of misguidance. There is no one who can remove him from this cave and make him a reflection of this Dīn whose light had shone brilliantly 1 350 years ago from the mountain tops of Fārān[1]…” (Another sentence: “I do not see anyone apart from you who can enable me to traverse the sky of guidance. This servant is a villager, he is not conversant with etiquette, pardon him…”

Hadrat Wālā wrote the following reply: “You are certainly a villager but you wrote so flowery things that even city dwellers and educated people would not have thought of them. My mind is not of such a high level where it can reach the limits of your gaze. In such a situation you must search for a shaykh who has reached a level which is above yours.”

12th Fragment: A Short Syllabus For Those Desirous Of Knowledge

After giving the matter a lot of thought, Hadrat Wālā laid down a short syllabus for those who are desirous of knowledge but do not have the time to study the entire Dars Nizāmī which is prevalent in the madāris. This course can be completed in two and half years. Hadrat Wālā himself tried it out on a few students. However, the condition is that the student must not be too young and must also have some knowledge of another language such as English. This syllabus has books on all the essential subjects through which sufficient and essential capability can be developed. Ten new books had to be compiled for this syllabus. They are collectively known as *Talkhīsāt ʿAshar* and are printed by Mujtabāʾī Printers. A complete and detailed scheme of this syllabus is provided at the beginning of

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[1] Name of a mountain near Makkah.

this collection. In short, there is no indispensable matter of Dīn which is needed by the Muslims and which Hadrat Wālā did not pay any special attention to. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best reward and may He enable us to benefit from him for a long time. Āmīn.

13th Fragment: Examples Of Hadrat Wālā's Statements And Writings

Two examples of Hadrat Wālā's statements and writings are presented.

The first example is in two parts. One is titled *Armughān ʿĪd* which is noted by Janāb Maulwī Hāfiz Jalīl Ahmad Sāhib, a Raʾīs from ʿAlīgarh who is presently residing in Thānah Bhawan. The second is noted by myself – the compiler of this biography – and is made up of two parts. The first part is titled *Dunyā kī Pastī Aur Dīn kī Mastī*. The second is titled *Sarmāya-e-Hastī*.

The second example is a collection of a few writings. This collection is titled *ʿIbādatur Rahmān*.

Hadrat Wālā's most erudite statements and writings have already been published in large numbers and are still being published. These can be obtained by interested persons very easily. There was therefore absolutely no need for these examples nor did I have the time to select them. However, I happened to find this collection which has neither been printed as yet nor is it made a part of any book. I felt that if it is included in *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, it will be preserved in print, and – to a certain extent – the reader will have, at first hand, a few examples of Hadrat Wālā's statements and writings. It has already been learnt that they have been taken incidentally at the exact time – no special attention or selection was made. Based on the above advantages, these examples are quoted in sequence, and the reality of each one will be presented at the beginning.

Armughān ʿĪd

Prelude:

It was in this month – Dhū al-Hijjah 1354 A.H. – on the day of ʿĪd al-Ad-hā when, as is his practice, Hadrat Wālā entered his assembly after the ʿīd salāh and began inspiring the large number of enthusiastic listeners with his worthy statements. Some of them were penned. What follows is a collection of

those statements. Bearing in mind their aptness with ʿīd, they are titled *Armughān ʿĪd* (the gift of ʿīd).

Difference between those on falsehood and their powers

A person asked: "Those who are on falsehood are able to exercise their powers on people. Some of those who are on truth also exercise their powers on their disciples. Is there any difference between the two?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "Yes, there is a difference. The reason for the difference is also unique, and it came to my understanding now. I will first show the difference and then explain the reason. The difference is that the influences of the truthful are not as powerful as those on falsehood. The reason why they are not as powerful is that the power of one's influences depends on one's mental powers. And mental power comes from concentration. The truthful do not have so much of concentration in matters which are related to everything apart from the Being of Allāh. Their hearts are filled with just one Being. Therefore, even if they turn their focus on something else, the thing which is settled in their hearts does not come out. Instead, thoughts of Allāh *taʿālā* repeatedly come into their hearts. Thus, when they turn their focus to anything apart from Him, they do not have total concentration towards that thing. In fact, these people consider it ill-mannered to turn their focus to something else to the extent that thoughts of Allāh *taʿālā* disappear completely or diminish. Courage in the definition of the Sufi masters is known as influence. The reason why they consider it ill-mannered is that their disposition is as described in the following couplet:

> Do not be heedless of that King for even the blink of an eye. It may well be that He is watching you and you are not even aware of it.

Since the focus of the truthful towards anything apart from Allāh *taʿālā* is weak, there is no total concentration in their thoughts on the untruth. This is why there is no power in it, and we said that the basis is mental power. This is why the effect of their focus is not as powerful as the influences of those who are on falsehood."

The story of a pious elder

Hadrat Wālā then related an incident which occurred in some place in India. A pious elder was walking along the bank of the Ganges River when he came across a yogi who was exercising

his influence on his disciples. The pious elder joined the assembly to see what was happening. The moment he sat down he felt as if whatever effulgence he had in his heart had been snatched away from him. Instead of the light, darkness had pervaded his entire heart. He felt an overwhelming demand to remain in the service of this yogi and to spend the rest of his life with him. He became terrified at this feeling and tried to repulse these thoughts, but they only intensified. Finally he could do nothing and thought that as far as possible, he has to act against his self and leave this place. He got up, and in his anger he said a few things against the yogi, and left. However, the same condition prevailed. He was very worried but did not know what to do. He fell asleep while in this condition. He saw a dream in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* appeared. He presented himself before Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and said: "O Rasūlullāh! Guide me for I have been destroyed." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Why did you do this in the first place?" In other words, why did you go and sit there in the first place? He replied: "O Rasūlullāh! I did a foolish thing. I repent and will never go to such a person in future." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* passed his blessed hand over his chest and the darkness in his heart was immediately removed. The previous effulgence returned to him, and he experienced absolute peace and tranquillity.

The influence of Dajjāl

Hadrat Wālā then said: "Based on this very same power of influence of those on falsehood, a Hadīth states that when you hear of the arrival of Dajjāl, you must flee from him." He added: "Dajjāl will have immense power to exercise his influence. Some people will witness his influences and become his followers."

Thinking about past sins

A person asked via a letter: When I think of my past sins and recall the various sins which I committed, I become extremely terrified and frightened. A type of darkness envelopes my heart. I think to myself: "How will you ever be pardoned?" Is it harmful for me to think of my sins in this way?

Without disclosing the identity of the person, Hadrat Wālā read the letter before all who were present. He then said: "There are

two possibilities here. (1) Thinking of past sins may be beneficial to him because when he thinks of them, it will create remorse and servitude, and he will be inspired to repent over them. (2) It could be harmful to him because if he continues thinking in this way, his fear will increase by the day and could eventually lead to despair. This is why I prescribed this for him: He must first ponder and decide that when he thinks of his past sins and it has an effect on his heart, does this effect result in an increase in good deeds or a decrease in good deeds?

If it results in an increase in good deeds, then the effect is praiseworthy. Since the thinking of past sins is the means for this effect, thinking in this way will be desirable. But if it results in a decrease in good deeds, the effect is neither praiseworthy nor desirable. Rather, it is blameworthy. Since the thinking [of past sins] caused this bad effect, the thinking will also be blameworthy. In such a case, he must repent totally for all past sins once, and then give up thinking of them. He must not think of his past sins wittingly again. If he thinks of them unwittingly, he must immediately seek forgiveness a few times and engage in dhikr. In this way, balance and moderation in the effect will be created."

A lecture in Kānpūr

Hadrat Wālā delivered a short talk which the audience thoroughly enjoyed. A lawyer from Punjab was in the audience and he too was enjoying the talk. While thinking back on this scene, Hadrat Wālā said: "Enjoyment is subservient to one's thoughts. On hearing one of my talks in Kānpūr, a lawyer said to me: 'Who is it who committed the wrong of making you a Maulwī? You ought to have become a barrister.'" Hadrat Wālā then said: "The lawyer heard my talk and expressed the wish that I ought to have been a barrister. However, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I never wished I had been a barrister or that I had studied English."

A person asked Hadrat Wālā: "Hadrat, what talk were you delivering which made that lawyer wish that you had been a barrister?" Hadrat Wālā related details of the incident as follows: When I went to Kānpūr as the head teacher at Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm, I was extremely young. A few elder students used to study under me. At the time, there were three madāris in Kānpūr where Arabic was taught. One of them was

Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm to which I was appointed as the head teacher. It was the oldest of all the madāris in Kānpūr. However, I resigned from it after a short time. Another madrasah was a Dār al-ʿUlūm in which Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Sāhib Kānpūrī was teaching. Before my arrival in Kānpūr, Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Sāhib had been teaching in Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm. The Maulānā was quite happy with the trustees of the Madrasah when he left and began teaching in Dār al-ʿUlūm. The third madrasah was Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm to where I went after leaving Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm. It was just newly established and I was its head teacher.

The Dār al-ʿUlūm was hosting a function, people requested me to deliver a talk and I acceded to their request. In the talk, I first replied to an objection which was being made by the masses. I said: Some people are asking: "What is the need for three Arabic madāris in one city? One Arabic madrasah is enough for one city." I said: "What is the need for several masājid in one city? One masjid is enough for one city." The answer you give to my question will be the answer to your objection. For example, you may say that having several masājid in one city will make it easy for worshippers to attend. In the same way, we say that several madāris will make it easy for students to attend. I do not understand why we are maligned for having several madāris. Yes, the presence of sincerity in those who establish the madāris is certainly a prerequisite. It is therefore totally wrong to object to several madāris in one city.

When I replied to the above objection in my talk, I wanted to express the monetary needs of the Dār al-ʿUlūm because this is a major reason for such a function. However, I wanted to speak on this topic in a manner which does not belittle the other madāris nor causes any type of harm to them. At the same time, I must be able to display that the Dār al-ʿUlūm has more monetary needs. Consequently, I explained the affinity which exists among the three madāris and said: "Brothers! The oldest madrasah here is Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm. Since it was established first, it is the oldest and we know that the elder has rights over his juniors.

A Hadīth states:

من لم يؤقر كبيرنا فليس منا

The one who does not respect our seniors is not of us.

Dār al-ʿUlūm is like a youth [in age] and also in strength. A youth has more strength than children and old people. Similarly – based on the large number of students - Dār al-ʿUlūm surpasses the other madāris. It also surpasses them in age because it was established after Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm but before Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm. It is therefore younger than Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm and older than Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm. This is just how a youth is younger than an old man but older than a child. Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm is like a child and Dār al-ʿUlūm like a youth. Just as a youth's food requirements are more than a child's and an old man's, the youth is eligible for more. This is why Dār al-ʿUlūm deserves more assistance than the other two madāris. We should therefore lend more monetary support to it at present. As for Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm, it deserves more respect and reverence because it is older, while Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm deserves more mercy due to its young age. (The one who penned this talk states: I could not pen everything. This is why I am merely presenting the gist of the talk).

[Hadrat Wālā continues]: Anyway, I had delivered that talk in the morning. The lawyer came to meet me in the evening and said: "Who is it who committed the wrong of making you a Maulwī? You ought to have become a barrister." I asked: "What happened?" He said: "You proved the preference of Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm in such a unique way that no one felt offended and, at the same time, you were able to establish the preference of Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm." I said: "I did not wittingly say anything which would accord preference to Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm over the other madāris. If I said anything like that unwittingly, please tell me." He said: "You referred to Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm as a child, Dār al-ʿUlūm as a youth and Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm as the oldest. Although it may appear as if you belittled Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, you actually made it surpass all the others. It surpasses Madrasah Fayd-e-ʿĀm because the latter is the oldest. It is like an old man, and everything which becomes old experiences a fall. So it is as though the time for its fall has arrived. You referred to Dār al-ʿUlūm as a youth, but youth is followed by old age. So it is as if its fall is also approaching. You referred to Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm as a child. Although a child is a child at present, it is growing and progressing daily. There is still a long time for the continuation of its progress. Thus, it is as if you established

the progress of your madrasah and the retrogression of the other madāris.

Your simile can be likened to the story of Mullā Do Piyāzah. When the king of Iran asked him: “What do you have to say about me and your king?” He replied: “O king! You are like a full moon while our king is a crescent.” In this way, he compared his own king to a crescent and the kingdom of the king of Iran to a full moon. The king of Iran was overjoyed because the Mullā gave preference to him over his own king.

When Mullā Do Piyāzah returned to India and reached the court of the king, the latter asked him: “Why did you say something which makes me look inferior to the king of Iran?” He replied: “I did not say anything which made you inferior to him. Instead, I said something which gives you superiority over him. I compared him to a full moon. A full moon is a moon which has reached its full size and after which it cannot grow larger. In fact, it starts to decrease day after day. Thus, his time of progress has come to an end and his fall is drawing near. On the other hand, I compared you to a crescent which is during its period of progress which continues day after day. In giving this example to the king of Iran, I was trying to tell him that his kingdom is about to come to an end while the kingdom of our king is on the rise.”

The king was happy with this answer and appreciated the Mullā’s intelligence.

In the above example, the superiority of the king of Irān was displayed superficially, but it really meant the superiority of his own king. In the same way, your example appears to give superiority to the other madāris but if one ponders over it, your madrasah is given preference over the others.

[Hadrat Wālā continues]: I laughed because I had not even dreamt of this theme. After some time, the same lawyer had the occasion of attending one of my other talks. Here again he was immensely impressed by it. However, this time he was more inclined towards Dīn. Therefore, instead of talking about my becoming a barrister, he was ecstatic and quoted the following couplet to me:

> With whose perfection did you become perfect! With whose beauty are you illuminated.

I too was quite zealous in those days, so I replied with the following couplet:

> I have been illuminated by the beauty of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. I have been perfected by the perfection of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

You have now learnt the background to my speech.

Referring to someone as a Shaykh and a Walī

Hadrat Wālā said: If a person knows the art of rectifying character and has knowledge of the ways of spiritual training and tutoring, it is permissible to refer to him as a shaykh, but not permissible to claim that such and such person is a walī. A shaykh is one who knows the art of rectification. A person can have knowledge of an art and, based on that knowledge, it will also be correct to say that he has knowledge of it. But this is not the case with wilāyat because wilāyat refers to closeness and acceptance in Allāh's sight, and no one can have knowledge of this (i.e. no one can say it with certainty. Although one can assume it after seeing the effects and signs, mere assumption is not sufficient to make an absolute claim).

Since we've just learnt that a person who knows the art of spiritual training can be referred to as a shaykh, it proves that it is possible for a person to be a shaykh-e-tarīqat but not a walī and similarly, not a pious person. This is because a shaykh is one who knows the art, and piety and purity are not prerequisites for knowledge of an art. However, there can be one objection to this: Why has piety been included among the signs of a qualified shaykh? After all, a seeker only needs to be trained and tutored, and this can be achieved from every such person who knows that art – irrespective of whether he is pious or not. The answer to this is that piety has been included among the signs of a qualified shaykh because there is no blessing in the training and tutoring of a non-pious person as opposed to what can be achieved from a pious shaykh.

The reason for this difference is that a pious shaykh gets the help of Allāh *taʿālā* in the training and tutoring of his disciples. A pious shaykh is inspired with very fine and beneficial methods of rectifying a seeker which a non-pious shaykh is deprived of. For example, if a shaykh is pious, his training is so effective that sometimes a little training is able to remove many years' spiritual ailments from a seeker. But this is not the case

in the training of a non-pious shaykh. This is why a seeker must search for a pious shaykh. And a qualified shaykh is the one who is pious. This is why piety and purity have been included in the prerequisites of a shaykh. The gist of all this is that without piety and purity, a shaykh cannot be a qualified shaykh in the above definition, though he may be merely a shaykh.

The reward for fasting on the day of ʿArafah in the case where there are differences in the date

This year, there were differences with regard to the sighting of the crescent for Dhū al-Hijjah. This is why a person asked: "Will we get the same reward for keeping fast on the day of ʿArafah as for the reward for the actual day of ʿArafah? I am asking this because we received news about the sighting of the crescent in other areas and we learnt that it was sighted on the 29th. According to their calculation, the day of ʿArafah was day before yesterday. Thus, according to this calculation, the fast which we kept yesterday was not for the day of ʿArafah."

Hadrat Wālā replied: ʿArafah was certainly yesterday and not the day before yesterday. And the fast which we kept yesterday was certainly the fast of ʿArafah. We will receive the same reward as for fasting on the day of ʿArafah. The reason for this is that the Sharīʿah did not impose on us to act on the fact but to act on what conclusion we come to in the light of the rules of the Sharīʿah. This is irrespective of whether what we act on is the fact or not. For example, the Sharīʿah prohibits us from performing salāh at the exact time of sunrise. Thus, once we see the tip of the sun, we will say that it is prohibited to perform salāh. Whereas, it has been established according to the principles of geometry that when the ball of the sun is visible, the sun has not really risen. Rather, it is after that. This is because sunrise refers to the sun rising above the edge of the horizon.

It has been established that when we are able to see the ball of the sun, it has not really risen above the edge. It is still below. If we were to consider this fact, the time of sunrise would not have taken place as yet, while we are prohibited from salāh at the time of its rising. Thus, salāh at this time ought to have been permissible. However, since the Sharīʿah did not impose on us to practise on the fact – and only instructed us to act on what is established by the injunctions of the Sharīʿah – and

that ruling over here is that when you perceive the rising of the sun, you must not perform s̲alāh even if the fact is something else.

Similarly it is forbidden for us to open our fast before sunset. We must open it after sunset. As long as we are able to see any portion of the ball of the sun, we will not say that opening the fast is not prohibited. Since some portion of the sun is visible to us, that time according to the Sharīʿah will not be referred to as setting of the sun. However, it is established according to the principles of geometry that the sun has set at that time and we are able to see it while it is beneath the horizon. If the fact was considered, opening the fast would have been permitted even though some portion of the sun is visible to us. However, even there, the Sharīʿah does not impose on us to practise on the fact. Rather, we have to act on whatever is established in the light of the rules of the Sharīʿah irrespective of whether the setting of the sun has really taken place or not.

The same applies to the rules of establishing the sighting of the moon. Once we have established its sighting in the light of the rules and affirmed that the crescent was not sighted on the 29th, then according to the Sharīʿah we have not sighted the crescent. We will have to act accordingly and according to that calculation, the 9th will be the day of ʿArafah for us and we will get the same reward as for what is stated for the actual fast of ʿArafah. As for the reports which we received of sightings on the 29th from other places, those are not considered according to the Sharīʿah. We should therefore not have any doubt about our fast on the basis of those reports. Even if a person does have a doubt and thinks to himself that reports of sighting of the crescent on the 29th have reached us, and these show that yesterday was the day of ʿArafah, the person must act against his self because this is what servitude demands. It is not brotherhood to do what the heart tells you and not to do what it does not. Rather, we will have to do what we are ordered even if it is against our likes. Let me add that it was best that the Sharīʿah did not impose on us to act on facts because had we been imposed to do that, we would have fallen into severe difficulties. Let me provide two examples from which you will easily understand how much of difficulties we would have fallen in had we been imposed to act on facts.

A person’s wife brings him food. How does he know that the food has not been poisoned? If you say: His wife cooked it and his wife cannot be so unfaithful, then we will say that this is no proof because there have been many incidents where a wife was treacherous and put an end to her husband’s life by poisoning him for her own selfish motives. If you had been imposed to establish the facts, you would start to die out of hunger because such possibilities exist everywhere.

Similarly, a person gets married and the women send a woman to his bedroom. How does he know that it is exactly the same woman to whom he got married because he had not seen his wife before this. If the women say that this is in fact your wife, it cannot be relied on with certainty. If we do not consider the rules according to which the Sharīʿah made the woman lawful to him and, instead we are imposed to act on the facts, it would be unlawful for the man to engage in conjugal relations with that woman. This is because it is not established that she is in fact his wife, and we know that it is unlawful to have conjugal relations with someone who is not your wife. Imagine the difficulty the man would have to go through if he was imposed to act on the facts.

Two types of Walīs

Hadrat Wālā said: There are two types of walīs: a walī kāmil and a walī mutawassit. It is easy to identify a walī mutawassit because he has certain signs which even the masses are able to identify as signs of wilāyat. On the other hand, a walī kāmil does not have any distinguishing feature. He is exactly like the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* and we know that the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* were so simple that the unbelievers used to say about them:

مَا لِهٰذَا الرَّسُوْلِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِيْ فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ

What is it with this Messenger!? He eats food and walks around in the market places.

This is why it is not possible for every person to identify a walī kāmil. It is extremely difficult. Leave aside the masses, sometimes even a walī finds it difficult to identify another walī. Therefore the statement: “Only a walī can identify another walī” is not correct because the auliyā’ have different ranks, how will a walī of one rank recognize another of a different rank?

Rather, the correct thing to say is "Only a Prophet can identify a walī". Since a Prophet has all the ranks of perfection collectively, he has knowledge of the different ranks of the auliyā'.

A Shaykh-e-Kāmil

Hadrat Wālā said: "A shaykh-e-kāmil is one who lowers himself from his position and undertakes to train and tutor a seeker. If a shaykh does not lower himself to the position of a seeker but tries to train a seeker while remaining in his position, the seeker will not be able to benefit from him. Take the example of a qualified teacher. When he teaches *Mīzān* to his student, he will lower himself to the student's level. If a teacher tries to teach *Mīzān* while remaining in his position, he is not a qualified teacher nor will his student benefit from him."

Answers to the objections of false creeds

Hadrat Wālā said: When people belonging to false creeds make objections against those who are on the truth, and the latter reply to their objections, then sometimes the masses may understand the objection quickly, but it takes them long to understand the reply to it. In fact, sometimes they do not even understand the reply. In such a case, they feel that the objection was valid and the reply which was given is insufficient. People are wrong to think in this way because if they understand the objection quickly and take long to understand the reply, it is not because the answer was insufficient and the objection was valid. Rather, if we had to ponder over the basis for the objection, it will be realized that the reason is something else. Let me explain this. One has to reflect over the reason behind the objection. In other words, what is it that is creating this objection? The real and fundamental reason behind an objection which is made against the truth is that the objector certainly has some hidden forethought irrespective of whether he had it from before or not, or had it from before but it was not in his mind at the time.

The absence of knowledge of this forethought creates an objection in the heart of the objector, and we know that absence of knowledge of a thing is essentially known as ignorance. Thus, we learn that an incorrect objection always stems from and is due to ignorance. Nowadays there is an

abundance of ignorance. On the other hand, a reply stems from something else, i.e. knowledge, and there is no knowledge today. Thus, the basis for the reply [knowledge] is not even found in people, while the basis for the objection [ignorance] is found in people. This is why the objection is understood quickly but the reply is not understood.

Take the issue of predestination as an example. It is a unanimous and absolute issue which is claimed not only by Islam but every divine religion has proofs for it. In fact, every intelligent person is compelled to accept it solely on the basis of rational proofs. Now although this issue is so certain and absolute, the objections which are made against it are quickly understood by the masses. But the answers which are provided by the 'ulamā' and sages are not understood. The inability to understand it causes people to sometimes think that the answer is insufficient. Whereas it is wrong to assume this. Rather, the actual reason is that since this issue is extremely complex, its answer also stems from a very high level of knowledge. And people do not have knowledge, but the basis for the objection [ignorance] is in them. This is why they are quick to understand the objection which is made against it, but cannot understand the answer which is provided.

This brings us to the end of the first part which is titled *Armughān 'Īd*.

Dunyā kī Pastī Aur Dīn kī Mastī

Prelude:

During the early stages of my two-year and four-month leave, I had penned some of H̲ad̲rat Wālā's statements. However, I stopped penning them once I became occupied in compiling *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*. The statements are made up of two parts. The first part is titled *Dunyā kī Pastī Aur Dīn kī Mastī*. The second is titled *Sarmāya-e-Hastī*.

The sound planning and excellent organizational skills of H̲ad̲rat Wālā's father

A conversation was revolving over the point that Western educated Muslims have not created as many assets as were created by people of the past. The reason for this is that the latter were intelligent and organized. Furthermore, they did not have as many unnecessary expenses like the modern educated people. H̲ad̲rat Wālā said: My father was employed as a

manager by Shaykh Ilāhī Bakhsh, a Raʾīs in Meerut. His monthly salary was fourteen rupees which remained at fourteen for the rest of his life. The same amount until the day of his demise came to him. However, since Shaykh Ilāhī Bakhsh Ṣāḥib held him in high regard, he had permitted him to take contract jobs from the commissariat. He could not have done any other work without permission while being employed by him.

Allāh *taʿālā* gave him so much of blessings in those contract jobs that he earned thousands of rupees. He purchased many properties, built houses, held large functions, and spent so much on weddings that it became a talk of the town. He earned so well despite not knowing a single word of English and without studying Arabic. He did study Persian but it was not much. In those days, Persian was taught to the level of *Gulistān, Būstān* and *Bahār Dānish* (names of Persian texts). However, the teacher used to make the students write in Persian. This is why my father had a lot of practice in writing Persian. He could easily write letters in Persian while lying down. He had a flowing style of writing. I could not write like that even though I studied a lot of Persian.

In those days, people earning small salaries used to be very intelligent, organized and were excellent coordinators. Even now, in some of the municipalities you will find some people earning just ten rupees, yet they surpass government workers earning thousands of rupees in their intelligence, sharpness and organizational skills. Government employees who hold B.A. and M.A. degrees do not have as much practical skills as them. Yes, the poor fellows do not wear western style coats and trousers. Those [government workers] who have studied under the old people are excluded from this. People of the past were people who could really work and possessed sound understanding. Present workers are just there for a show.

They were so intelligent that when I was still not even wearing pants, my father had already decided that I will study Arabic and my brother will study English. He had gauged our inclinations when we were still children, and although he was a worldly person, he got me to study Arabic with passionate enthusiasm. Although parents are generally more inclined to their children who study English, my father loved me dearly, while he had a normal relationship with my brother. He used to

give me preference over my brother on account of my knowledge of Dīn.

(Someone asked, so Hadrat Wālā said) I had qualified while he was still living and was appointed as a teacher in Kānpūr. In fact, he even came to Kānpūr and observed me teaching. He also went to visit Maulānā Ahmad Hasan Sāhib who was a teacher in another madrasah in Kānpūr. He went there although that madrasah was – to a certain extent – an opposition to us. However, in those days, the effects of such differences would not reach the level of dislike and severance of ties. My father considered the Maulānā to be a scholar and pious personality, and therefore went to meet him with much love and enthusiasm. When he returned from there, he said to me: "Bhāi, he is working very hard. You must not work so hard because it may damage your brains." I replied: "I do not work too hard, but the situation has come to a level where I have to work hard because when a person works continually, he develops an enthusiasm for work."

Anyway, my father was most pleased when he observed my teaching activities in Kānpūr and was most satisfied at having educated me in Arabic. I was very fastidious in those days and some of its effect is still with me. A few distasteful incidents took place which caused me to say that I want to leave my job. My father said to me: "The permission which I gave you to take the job was not because of the salary (because my father was personally taking care of my needs and I had no need to be employed). I permitted you to take the job because you have just recently studied all your text books. If you teach those books, they will become firmly entrenched in you. You should therefore not rush into leaving your job. Think about it carefully. We cannot be so fastidious." My father answered all my misgivings by saying: This could be the reason for this, or that can be the cause of that, and so on. In short, he provided explanations for everything and sent them to me.

My brother objected one day by saying: "When Ashraf 'Alī asks for anything, you give him without hesitation. But when I ask for anything, you make many inquiries and ask for accounts." My father replied: "Bhāi, I feel very sorry for him. Whatever he takes from me will only be for as long as I am living. Remember, when I die, he will distance himself completely from my wealth and properties. He will not take anything." I was

astonished, how did he know this from before hand? It is not that I did not take anything from the estate. Yes, I certainly did not take as others normally do. I did not take the doubtful wealth and none of his properties are in my possession.

The difference between my education and my brother's

My father must have seen some indications at that time. Since childhood I was enthusiastic about Dīnī matters by Allāh's inspiration. When I was very young, but old enough to go to the shops to buy basic items, I recall the shops in Meerut being quite far and there were a few masājid along the way. It used to be about nine or ten o'clock in the morning. The moment I would see a masjid, I would go in, proceed straight to the pulpit, and say whatever sermon I remembered. I would then go to the shops to buy the items. Although it was a time of playing and jumping, I had so much of love for masājid that this [going to masājid and delivering sermons] was my way of playing. All this was solely from Allāh *taʿālā*. Whenever my brother and I committed any mischief, my father would beat him more.

My foster mother said to my father on one occasion: "How is it that you do not say anything to one son yet you beat the other one?" He replied: "It is the younger one who is teaching the mischief to the older one. The other reason is that the older one learns his lessons while the younger one does not. This is why I become angry on him[Hadrat Wālā's younger brother]." Although I studied Arabic and my brother studied English, it was he who expressed remorse over not studying Arabic. By virtue of his Western education, my brother got a good job, a top salary and progress in every regard. This was the effect of that education which had developed through my father's companionship. On the other side, my progress was that my salary was fifty rupees but I considered it to be a great bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* because when I was a student, I used to think that ten rupees will be enough. I felt that husband and wife will need five rupees each, and so, ten rupees as a salary will be enough. When I received fifty rupees, it was five times more than what I estimated. This is why I considered it to be a very great bounty.

When my brother started working, he was earning as much as 500 rupees. He was employed as a secretary at Bareilly Municipality. Despite this, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I did

not experience even a whispering that had I studied English I would have earned a similar amount. Even if he was earning a thousand rupees, I would not have felt any regret for not studying English. On the other hand, he constantly expressed remorse over why my father did not make him study Arabic as well. We can gauge from this that he was not enjoying life as much as I was. He had the wealth but not the enjoyment; and the fundamental thing is peace of mind and enjoyment. These can only be acquired from Allāh's remembrance. This despite the fact that our salāh is so worthless – we merely perform it without reciting the Qur'ān properly, without carrying out the different postures correctly, and without proper humility and submission. I say this couplet which applies to this situation:

> If a morsel of food which is mixed with soil can make a person into a madman, imagine what it will do if it is clean [without soil]!

When evils and desires of the self are adulterated into the drink, it turns a person into a madman. What can be said of the person who has been given a pure drink by Allāh *taʿālā*? What can be said of that condition which brings such enjoyment? When Allāh *taʿālā* enabled us to take His name, of what worth is all this treasure? However, since this world is also needed, we have to ask for it and also make plans for it. Nevertheless, it is not the sole objective while Dīn is the sole objective. When knowledge of Dīn is acquired, the world – to the extent of necessity – is also acquired, and that too, with honour and peace of mind. However, assuming if the world is not acquired, since Dīn is the sole objective, there is no remorse. On the other hand, the sole objective of Western education is this world which, in most cases nowadays, is also not acquired. Thus, the result in this case is nothing but remorse. We [ordinary people] are not even tested. The Ahlullāh have been put through severe tests. The extent of their happiness with poverty and hunger can never be experienced by the wealthy.

A person then entered the assembly and sat in the way. Hadrat Wālā continued reprimanding him and speaking about the harms of acting in this manner until the end of the assembly. Details in this regard will be noted later. That is all. This brings us to the end of *Dunyā kī Pastī Aur Dīn kī Mastī.* I recall my own couplet on this theme:

How can worldly progress ever be compared with Dīnī progress? Even though hundreds and thousands of dust particles were gathered, they could not reach the sky.

Sarmāya-e-Hastī

A person is taken to task for his error

A person sends one of his attendants with a china plate after zuhr and asks Hadrat Wālā to write the verses of cure and other verses for a certain patient. This has been his practice since quite some time. Today the attendant did the foolish thing of coming before zuhr, leaving the plate where Hadrat Wālā normally sits, and went for zuhr salāh. Hadrat Wālā reprimanded by saying: "Imagine if I tripped and fell. Why did you do against your norm?" The man could not give an answer. He was instructed to inquire from others on how to give an answer so that it would serve as a lesson for the future and he may remember it for the rest of his life.

Lack of intelligence and lack of concern

Hadrat Wālā said in this regard: "There are natural differences among intellects. I do not take a person to task for his lack of intelligence. Rather, my main complaint is against a lack of concern. When people do not show any concern, I take them to task. If they were to show some concern, then first of all, there would be very few mistakes, and even if they are committed, they will not be offensive. This is because when I perceive any concern and regard in a person, I consider him pardoned when he commits any mistake as a result of his lack of intelligence. This is why I am not offended, even though I may be inconvenienced. The most offence is caused by lack of concern and absence of reliability."

The story of a person who came to meet Hadrat Wālā

A person undertook a journey and presented himself here for the sake of bayʿah. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "There was no need to undertake a journey for the sake of bayʿah. This matter could have been settled through a letter. And even now, it will be settled through a letter. Your coming is therefore a waste. Had you asked me, I would never have given you permission to travel for this purpose. Your purpose will not be fulfilled now, so what do you have to say about staying here?" The man

replied: “I will stay over for a few days.” Hadrat Wālā asked: “For what purpose?” He replied: “There is benefit in sitting in the company of the pious.” Hadrat Wālā said: “I am not a pious person.” He said: “You are a pious person in my view.” Hadrat Wālā asked: “Do you consider me to be an honest man or a liar?” He replied: “An honest man.” Hadrat Wālā said: “So I am telling you that I am not a pious man.” The man said: “There is benefit in sitting in the company of a scholar.” Hadrat Wālā said: “I am not even a scholar. Do you think a person becomes a scholar merely by studying a few text books? A scholar is one like Anwar Shāh Sāhib.” The man fell silent. Hadrat Wālā said: “At least give me a sensible reason for staying over.” The man still remained silent. Hadrat Wālā said: “If you cannot give me a good reason, go and ask someone and come back.” The man continued sitting there. Hadrat Wālā said: “You may leave. One does not act against instructions.” The man got up and left.

Hadrat Wālā then addressed those who were present: “I want facts and realities to be exposed; people are engrossed in custom-worship. Was it something for him to say that he considers me to be a pious man, therefore he will stay over?! Had I permitted him to stay for this purpose, it would mean that I really consider myself to be pious. Whereas, first of all I am not a pious man. Even if I was one, then one of the essentials of a pious man is that he must not consider himself to be pious. However, let me teach you a worthy point. For a person to be pious, it is essential for him not to consider himself to be pious. However, the one who does not consider himself to be pious is not necessarily a pious man. In other words, not considering one’s self to be a pious man does not necessitate piety, but piety demands that a person does not consider himself to be pious.”

“There are many non-pious people who do not consider themselves to be pious. Do you think they become pious because of that?! If you consider me to be pious, you can do so but what is the need to tell me? You can consider me to be pious or a flagrant sinner, but why do you have to tell me? If you consider me to be a flagrant sinner, you can do that but do not tell me because this will also be offensive. Similarly, you can consider me to be pious if you want, but do not tell me because it causes a different type of offence. The simple thing which he [the man in this story] should have told me is: I intend staying over so that I may hear something worthwhile

and useful. In such a case, neither is there a need for a scholar nor a pious person. We are able to hear useful things from certain sinners, immoral persons and ignorant people. I had heard a point from an absolutely ignorant person, and that point is still firmly embedded in my heart."

"It was during the political upheaval in the country. We were travelling by train and some people were engaged in conversations on this subject. A man who was neither a scholar nor a pious man summed up the entire conversation in such a beautiful way. He said: "Bhāi! All we are saying is remain united and remain righteous." In other words, remain united and within the boundaries of the Sharīʿah. Glory to Allāh! Look at what a beautiful thing he said and in what excellent words!"

Later on, the man [in this story] probably heard from someone or thought about it himself and came to Hadrat Wālā and said: "I would like to stay over, perhaps I may hear something worthwhile." Hadrat Wālā said: "You have now said the correct thing. You may stay as long as you like."

Hadrat Wālā's method of rectification

In the after zuhr assembly it is Hadrat Wālā's practice to reply to letters and to address those who are present in-between. If any letter has a useful theme, he will relate it to us without disclosing the identity of the person. He will also relate his reply verbally together with providing us with details and explanations. One person wrote: "Hadrat Wālā's scolding benefited me. I also realized that the presence of passion is not an illness, but its absence is harmful. At the same time, the greed for passion has also lessened."

Hadrat Wālā said: "People go around talking about character and good manners. Look, what he had considered to be my impoliteness has these benefits. The reality became clear to him, and the portion of desire which he was suffering from also disappeared. Had I treated him according to normal mannerisms, then it would be similar to a person having some decaying matter on his hand, but it was continually patched and plastered. In the meantime, the decay continued worsening from within until his hand had to be amputated. Had his hand been operated at the beginning, it would not have come to this. If a soft approach was adopted on a certain occasion and it

caused harm to Dīn, then it is more serious than amputating one's hands and legs.

What I really want is for everyone to know my exact nature. No one must be deceived by me. Thereafter, the one who wants to remain here may do so, and the one who wants to leave is free to go. I cannot change my ways especially when I am also seeing their benefits. If I were to adopt "normal" mannerisms, it will certainly be to my advantage but it is deceitful. If a doctor looks for comfort and thinks to himself, why should I bother about taking a pulse and referring to my books, he is not a doctor he is an impostor, a thief and a rogue. I really want to open people's eyes [to the reality] even if they feel offended at the time. However, once they start corresponding with me, then within a short time they will say:

> May Allāh reward you for having opened my eyes.
> You have made me a confidant to the Beloved.

The story of a peasant

Maulwī Shabbīr Ahmad used to say that there is a famous eye specialist in Maugahe. A peasant went to him but when he was about to lie down for the operation, he became terrified and ran away. The specialist ordered his workers to go after him and bring him back. He was brought back by force, made to lie down and they held his hands and legs. The peasant was screaming but the doctor commenced with the operation immediately and set his eyes right. The peasant was overjoyed and thanked the doctor profusely. The pain was not really much, and his eyes too were put right.

The story of my father's finger

My father's finger had become swollen. The doctor told him that he will have to poke it with a lancet. My father refused and asked the doctor to do something else. He said: "Very well, I will see what I can do." He was still trying to work out something when he saw an ox-cart passing by. My father used to travel by ox-cart most of the time. It was probably an ox-cart of the government which was passing by. The doctor turned my father's attention towards the ox-cart and said: "Is this ox-cart coming from the government?" While my father had turned his attention towards the ox-cart, the doctor inserted the lancet without my father even realizing it. When he looked down, he noticed blood flowing from his finger. He asked: "What is this?"

The doctor said: “I have already inserted the lancet, what do you have to worry about? You did not feel any pain.” My father was quite happy.

The story of Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib

Talking of becoming happy, I recall Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib Majdhūb who had taken away the condition of enthusiasm and yearning of my maternal grandfather. My maternal grandmother complained that he has become so occupied in dhikr and other spiritual practices that he is not bothered in the least about his wife and children. He is not even concerned about providing for them. My grandfather was overwhelmed by a peculiar feeling of dhikr and spiritual practices which resulted in this situation. The Hāfiz Sāhib focussed his influence on my grandfather and took away all those feelings and emotions. Although my grandfather had a lot of faith in Hāfiz Sāhib, he was very much afflicted by his action and began scolding him and shouting at him by saying: “You are a thief, you are a swindler. You robbed me. You destroyed me.” The Hāfiz Sāhib continued on his way and left. My grandfather was very distressed by the snatching away of his condition because the slightest change in feelings and emotions is most difficult on a seeker.

The slightest decrease in a seeker’s condition can cause him to want to break his head. My grandfather was most distressed by this situation for a few days but regained his stability gradually and became occupied in earning a livelihood. Anyway, he was a pious man. When my grandfather was on his deathbed, the Hāfiz Sāhib made a sudden appearance, proceeded straight to my grandfather’s side and said: “Najābat ‘Alī! Look at me.” The moment he turned towards him, his previous condition returned to him. The condition which he had taken away from him returned. He had come for this purpose.

My grandfather now thanked him profusely and was overjoyed. He then said: “I am now experiencing two conditions, one of beauty and the other of power.” Someone said to him: “Keep quiet, these things should not be expressed.” He fell silent. I heard this from my father. He then called for all the relatives in the house, met each one, formally bid farewell to each of them and said: “I am going to die now.” Saying this, he covered himself from head to toe with a sheet. All who were present began crying. When he heard the sounds of crying, he

uncovered his face and said in a disapproving tone: "You wretched people will not even let me die." Everyone fell silent. He covered his face once again. The house people lifted the sheet after some time and saw that he had passed away.

I heard of very few majdhūbs like Hāfiz Ghulām Murtadā Sāhib. I was born through his prayers. He never used to wear clothes. He would only wrap himself in a blanket. Despite this, no one ever saw him naked even when he was lying down. I came across very few praises about majdhūbs from the pious elders. However, I personally heard Hadrat Hājī Sāhib speaking highly of him. He used to say: "Hāfiz Sāhib had given me the glad tiding that *wahdatul wujūd* will be fully exposed to you." He added: "I did not even know what *wahdatul wujūd* was at the time of the glad tiding." But when it was exposed to Hadrat, and he used to speak on this subject, it would seem as if he was seeing it right before his eyes. Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* – who was considered to be a man of the external self by unknowing people – said in my presence: "Hadrat Hājī Sāhib used to say with reference to this issue [*wahdatul wujūd*]: 'This issue is a rational one and also an inspirational one.' I am going one step further and saying that it is an observable issue and also one that can be perceived." Look at how much it was exposed to Maulānā [Gangohī] that he even went one step forward from the statement of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib and said that it is observable and can also be perceived.

Ta'wīdh for protection from black magic

A person requested for a ta'wīdh on behalf of another person for black magic. Hadrat Wālā said: "I can write one for you but I am not an 'āmil. The person should also ask Maulwī Asghar Husayn Sāhib because he is an 'āmil. Look! A sword will only cut when it is wielded by a person who knows the art of swordsmanship. If it is wielded by a novice, it will not cut even though the sword is the same. It cuts when wielded by the hand of one person and not by the hand of the other."

One's approach has to be according to the need

A person arrived recently and as was Hadrat Wālā's habit, he posed essential questions about his name, occupation and so on to him. He then asked him the reason for his journey [to Thānah Bhawan]. He replied: "To obtain the blessings of

meeting you." He added after a short while: "There is one more thing which I have to say." Hadrat Wālā said: "I am not going to listen to it. First you set me at ease and then you want to say something else. Why did you not tell me at the first instance when I asked you?" He replied: "I forgot." Hadrat Wālā said: "If you forgot then leave it as something forgotten. When you had left home with the intention of saying something to me, how could you have forgotten it? All it amounts to is the same old custom-worship of not saying everything at once. People want me to succumb to their customs, how can I do that? A doctor who succumbs to the patient is not a doctor, he is a thief."

Hadrat Wālā then related a story related to the above example. When Hadrat Maulānā Ismāʿīl Shahīd *rahimahullāh* went to Lucknow, he was hosted by one of the royalty. The Nawāb Sāhib said to the one who was hosting him: "Tell the Maulānā to deliver a lecture here." The person knew that the Maulānā was very frank and forthright, so he deferred asking him.

When the Nawāb Sāhib persisted, he relayed the request to the Maulānā and added: "Hadrat! The Shīʿah are in control here. Do not say anything in your lecture which is openly against the Shīʿah and which may offend the Nawāb Sāhib." The Maulānā assured him that he will not say anything inopportune. However, when he sat on the pulpit to deliver his lecture, then the first thing he said was: "Brothers! A lecture is a clinic, and the ʿulamā' are the doctors. It is the duty of the doctor to write a prescription in accordance with the illness. I notice that our Nawāb Sāhib has the illness of Shīʿism, and one of our well-wishers requested that I do not say anything against Shīʿism." By saying this, the Maulānā absolved the person from any blame. He then continued: "A treatment is prescribed according to the nature of the illness." He then went into much detail in refuting the Shīʿahs.

You see! We cannot treat according to the requests or demands which are made on us. Rather, a treatment has to be according to the nature of the illness. In the same way, our mannerisms cannot be as demanded by others. Rather, our approach will be according to the need. It cannot be that we have a soft approach with every single person even if it is harmful.

Hadrat Wālā then read a letter to us and the reply which he wrote to it. He added: "This reply will not be to his liking but it will be in accordance with his illness. The reply to any letter

which leaves here is always in accordance with the illness, not in accordance with the likes [and dislikes] of the person."

Adding the word "Sayyidunā" in the durūd sharīf

The discussion was revolving around adding the word "Sayyidunā" before the blessed name of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a Durūd Sharīf. Hadrat Wālā said: Both practices are established from the ʿulamāʾ – to add the word and not to add it. Adding it shows perfection in love while not adding it demonstrates perfection in emulation because adding it is not established from Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* To each his own inclination. If a person does not add the word because it is not mentioned in the Hadīth, it demonstrates perfection in emulation. If a person adds it, it shows perfection in etiquette. I recall an incident. When Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* pledged allegiance to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and he dictated the words of bayʿah to him, he said: "I pledge bayʿah to Imdādullāh Sāhib." Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was most pleased by this and said: "You have understood the reality. All the other murīds sufficed by saying the name only [i.e. they only said Imdādullāh]." Thus, we see that Maulānā Gangohī did not suffice with the name only. Rather, he added words which pleased Hadrat Hājī Sāhib which caused him to say: "You have understood the reality." What he meant by this is that up to this point, all those whom he initiated as murīds only repeated the exact words which he dictated to them. Whereas they ought to have shown some respect. Obviously, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib himself could not have added the word of respect for himself." This incident is similar to the issue under discussion.

The Sufis provide leeway for all mannerisms, they do not impose on anyone. Although they themselves may surpass others as regards respect, they will not reprimand others. They have noble thoughts about everyone. If a person does not add the word "Sayyidunā" in the Durūd Sharīf, they consider it to be perfection in emulation. Similarly, they have an accepted principle that there are countless ways of reaching Allāh *taʿālā.* In short, they extract as much latitude and flexibility as possible and have noble thoughts about everyone…their noble thoughts are so much that…

I came across a Sufi's statement in a book. His shaykh had said something to him so he retorted: "How should I know

Allāh, I only know you?!” I went to Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* while I was filled with rage and said to him: “Are there so ignorant Sufis who can retort to their shaykh’s in this way?!” Hadrat laughed and said: “Bhāi! All he said was: ‘How should I know Allāh, do you know Allāh?’” I said: “Hadrat! You are right, who is there who has fathomed Allāh *taʿālā* fully?” He said: “That’s it, why did you not take this meaning.” In other words, he did not say it before you. If it is said in a disrespectful tone, then a different rule will be applied. But if he said it in a tone which depicts man’s helplessness, then another rule will be applied.” Glory to Allāh! These are the real Sufis. They do not have bad thoughts about anyone.

An incident concerning Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad

Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* went to Charthāwal on one occasion. A person who rarely used to perform salāh came to perform salāh in the masjid on account of the Maulānā. After all, Muslims certainly have love for the Ahlullāh no matter what they may be, even if they are flagrant sinners and immoral people. Anyway, this non-musallī also came to the masjid. People began mocking him and said: “Brother, you must come here by mistake.” They continued in this vein until the poor fellow felt ashamed. The matter went one step further when some people complained to the Maulānā about this person not coming for salāh. The Maulānā asked: “How do you know that he does not perform his salāh?” They replied: “No one ever saw him performing salāh.” The Maulānā said: “He probably performs it at home. And if someone objects that he is discarding the congregation, then we could say that he probably has a valid excuse. If a person discards the congregation it does not necessarily mean that he discards salāh totally, or that he is discarding the congregation without a valid reason. How can you say this?”

The man relates: “I repented immediately and became a regular performer of salāh for the rest of my life.” The man felt ashamed and thought to himself that he is so useless and yet this Maulānā does not have any aversion toward him. This in itself changed his condition. You see! He had good thoughts even about a flagrant sinner. When softness of this type is adopted for the sake of flattery, there is no blessing in it. But if it is done with a good intention, then it is certainly blessed.

An incident related to Maulānā Muzaffar Husayn

Maulānā Muzaffar Husayn Sāhib Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh* also did a similar thing. A wrestler came to the masjid to take a bath. He needed to take a bath but he would not perform salāh. The mu'adh-dhin began saying things to him and added: "This worthless fellow comes to mess the masjid, but he neither performs salāh nor keeps fast. Yet he comes here to remove his impurity and renders our utensils impure." The Maulānā was present at the time. He scolded the mu'adh-dhin by saying: "What right do you have to stop him? Everyone has a right over the masjid utensils. What right do you have to stop anyone?" The Maulānā then went personally to the wrestler and said: "Come, let me fill the water for you." He felt very ashamed and did not allow the Maulānā to carry out that task. But we see that the Maulānā himself was ready to pour the water for him.

The Maulānā then said to him: "Brother, you are a wrestler, where did you learn wrestling? Who is your trainer? Where did you have wrestling matches? Where did you win your matches?" In short, he continued talking to him in line with his disposition. When the wrestler's heart opened up, the Maulānā said: "Bhāi! I have fallen in love with you. You have such a beautiful and lean body. When you told me that you won many big matches, it increased my love for you. However, what man really needs to do is to wrestle and topple Satan. Now you must focus on toppling Satan. You must be regular with your salāh." The Maulānā continued in this vein until the wrestler repented and became a regular performer of salāh from that time on.

Qādir Bakhsh Khān becomes a regular performer of salāh

The Maulānā [Muzaffar Husayn Sāhib] did something even more extraordinary on another occasion. There was a landowner in Pakkī Garhī by the name of Qādir Bakhsh Khān. He owned several villages but they were given away as payment for dowry. His grandson [has been reduced to such poverty that] he only earns 8-10 rupees a month for delivering summons, whereas Qādir Bakhsh was extremely wealthy. It is because of his giving so much as dowry that the Pathāns in the surrounding areas were destroyed. Whereas, previously they were extremely wealthy. Here too there used to be very high payments for dowry. Now it has at least come down to 2 500 rupees. I specified 1 100 rupees as dowry for my nephews. This

amount is equivalent to the dowry which was given to Hadrat Umm Habībah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*. There is a slight decimal difference between the two. Giving this amount is easy, and if the woman forgoes her right, it will not cause too much of pain.

Anyway, due to Qādir Bakhsh Khān's wealth and influence he made it his striking feature to dye his beard, adopt a frowning countenance and to live an elegant life. He abstained from performing salāh. When Maulānā Muzaffar Husayn Sāhib went to Pakkī Garhī, the people said to him that they will only acknowledge him if he is able to influence Qādir Bakhsh to perform salāh. He replied: "Very well, I am going to him." He placed his trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and proceeded to meet him. The man received him respectfully and warmly. The Maulānā said that he does not intend being there for too long, and commenced without any prelude. He said to him: "If you do not feel offended, can I ask you something?" The man replied: "Hadrat, you may most certainly ask me." He said: "Why do you not perform salāh?" He replied: "Hadrat, let me speak the truth. I also feel that I must perform salāh but I am very enthusiastic about dying my beard. If I were to perform wudū', the dye will come out and then it will take several hours to re-dye. I dye it in the morning and I don't have to worry about it for the rest of the day. If I had to perform salāh, I will have to dye it five times a day. It will be most difficult to do this and a lot of time will be wasted." The Maulānā said: "What if you get permission to perform salāh without wudū'?" He replied: "Then there will be no problem, but I have heard that a person becomes an unbeliever if he performs salāh without wudū'." Maulānā said: "Do you think unbelief comes so easily? Ask me, I know what unbelief is. I permit you to perform salāh without wudū', but I make one condition: you must perform it in the masjid with congregation."

The old people used to be firm in their resolution and true to their promise. Today, even the pious ones do not have these qualities. Anyway, the Maulānā left after "lighting the fire" and the fire began heating up. Qādir Bakhsh was thinking to himself: I do not know if anyone ever performed salāh without wudū' or not. It was either before or after the salāh that the thought came to his mind that although it may not be unbelief to perform salāh without wudū', how can I perform it like that? (It will only be unbelief if it is considered inconsequential, and there was no possibility of it here. However, it is certainly

sinful, and that too if a person has the intention of salāh. If a person is merely imitating the postures of salāh, it will not be a sin if he does not have wudū'. The person may – through his extreme naivety – be merely following the postures of salāh. If he was performing it with the intention of salāh then it could be similar to treating a sick patient with an unlawful substance on the basis that such leeway is possible in the view of a reformer. Although I have my reservations about it, one should not hasten in objecting to a reformer. Anyway, he thought to himself that although it is not unbelief, how can he perform salāh without wudū'?). It was actually due to the Maulānā's mercy and affection that he heard my difficulty and gave me permission to perform salāh without wudū'. His actual intention was to put me onto the path. After all, I myself know that salāh without wudū' is not valid. I am not so ignorant as to not know such a basic ruling.

What could he do now? He thought to himself: "I made a promise to the Maulānā, it is impossible for me not to perform salāh. I also know that salāh without wudū' is not valid. I have to perform wudū' and I have to perform my salāh." He performed wudū', re-dyed his beard and performed salāh. He did this for 2-3 days. He then thought to himself: "This is like a war. I should rather just leave my beard alone." He left it alone, became a regular performer of salāh and also gave up dying his beard."

Matters related to the pious

What do we know about these matters related to the pious!? The man was not given permission [to perform salāh without wudū'], he was placed onto the path. The Maulānā knew – through his internal light – that it will not even come to that. A reformer has the right to resort to a plan and a sequence in rectification. Had he not done this, it would have been difficult to bring him onto the path.

A delegation of Banū Thaqīf came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and said: "We are prepared to embrace Islam but on two conditions. One is that we will not give zakāh. The other is that we will not take part in jihād." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "I accept your conditions." You see, he accepted conditions which were against Islam. This is an act of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself, not of any ʿālim. One may object to an ʿālim, but who can object to

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam? The Sahābah radiyallāhu ʿanhum asked: "O Rasūlullāh! What kind of Islam is this – no zakāh and no jihād?!" He replied: "At least let them come into Islam, they will then do everything. They will pay zakāh and also take part in jihād. The blessing of īmān will create a special light in the heart which will inspire them to carry out all obligations." So you see! Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam did not resort to strictness here.

Take another example. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam asked a woman to repent from wailing over the deceased. She said: "O Rasūlullāh! I have one episode of wailing which I have to fulfil. Let me fulfil it and I will repent thereafter. I will never practise wailing after that." Another woman must have come and wailed over one of the present woman's relative, that is why she must have sought permission to reply in like manner. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam granted her permission. She got up and left, but while she was still on the way, she came back and said: "O Rasūlullāh! I am repenting from this request as well." Look! Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam permitted one episode of wailing for a particular reason but through the blessing of his permission, it created a dislike for this act in her heart. Despite having obtained permission, her heart did not want to commit a sin even once. So if Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam is convinced that people will not act on the permission which he granted, what objection can there be to it? If there is any objection, it will mean that it was not a permission, they were merely words which he uttered, and therefore there can be no objection whatsoever.

It is really difficult to recognize the condition of the Sufi masters. This is why Maulānā says in a couplet:

> A green fellow cannot identify the condition of an expert. This is why the statement was concise. As-salāmu ʿalaykum.

The Maulānā makes mention of this theme in several places:

> If Khidar ʿalayhis salām damaged the ship at sea, there are a 100 repairs in his damage.
>
> The ordinary people cannot understand the mystery behind the boy whom Khidar ʿalayhis salām killed.

> Once you have adopted someone as a mentor, do not be weak-hearted. Do not be lethargic and sluggish like mud.
>
> O you sincere one! Be patient in carrying out the work of Khidar *ʿalayhis salām* so that he does not tell you: "Go! This is where we part ways."

In reality, these matters are not in conflict with the Sharīʿah, rather they are not understood by us.

The story of a pious man of Delhi

Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to relate an incident about a pious man of Delhi. He sat on the road one day and repeatedly said: "I am neither Your servant nor are You my God." On hearing this, the people began cursing him and were saying: "How sad! Look at this pious man. He has become an unbeliever." Someone related the incident to a judge who summoned the pious man and asked him: "Whom were you addressing?" He laughed at the question and said: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* there is at least one intelligent man in Delhi. You are the only one who posed this question. As for the remaining foolish ones, they assumed that – Allāh forbid - I was addressing Allāh *taʿālā* and therefore issued a fatwā of unbelief against me. Allāh forbid, can I ever make such an audacious statement before Allāh?! The fact of the matter is that since this morning, my self has been demanding on me that I must eat *khīr*.[1] I was addressing my self: 'Why should I pay heed to you. I am neither your servant nor are you my God.' I was actually responding to my self while people assumed that – Allāh forbid – I was addressing Allāh."

Explanations to the statements and actions of the pious

It should be borne in mind that it is not permissible to explain the statements and actions of all and sundry. An explanation or silence will apply where rare and infrequent statements and actions of this nature issue forth, and the overwhelming condition of the person is one of rectitude. Where there are more evils and every statement and action of the person needs to be explained in some way or the other, it is obligatory to sever one's ties from such a person. However, there is one

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[1] A sweet dish made with rice.

additional point in this regard, viz. if the pious of the time treat the person with respect, then although we are ordered to sever ties from him, we must not make objections against him. If this is not the case, it is obligatory to speak out against him. Whatever the case, ties must be severed because if they are continued, the heart will remain constricted and one will not be able to benefit because benefit can only be acquired when there is open-heartedness. If a person is lax and tries to explain away every single thing, then explanations for the idol-worship of the Hindus will also be found. For example, it could be said that they are overcome by the concept of *wahdatul wujūd*, that is why they are worshipping idols. Therefore, one should not get into all this. If he does, neither will jihād remain in Islam, nor the penal code and injunctions. Thus, this is not what is meant by explanation. Rather, if there is overwhelming rectitude, and such things are said or done on very rare occasions, then we will have to look for some way of explaining them.

The story of Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham

Take the story of Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh* as an example. He left his kingdom and went to Makkah Muʿazzamah. He had left one of his children behind. The child's grave is also in Makkah (he is well-known by the name of Shaykh Mahmūd). When the child had reached the age of majority, he proceeded for hajj. He thought to himself that he will also search for his father and mother. When he proceeded for the tawāf, Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh* was also performing tawāf at the time. But neither one recognized the other because Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh* had emigrated and left him behind when he was a small child. The boy was handsome and also belonged to the royalty. He appeared even more striking in his royal garments. Hadrat Ibrāhīm was naturally attracted to him and was looking at him repeatedly. On seeing this, his associates assumed that the shaykh has slipped up today; after all, he is looking at this youngster again and again. In short, they had evil thoughts about the shaykh. No one knew that he was his son.

Whether or not it was exposed to the shaykh that this is his son, since it was a lawful situation, Allāh *taʿālā* protected him. When the two met after the tawāf, the shaykh realized that this was his son. The first question he asked him was: "What is your Dīn?" He replied: "Islam." Hadrat Ibrāhīm said: "All praise

is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.” He asked: “Have you studied the Qur’ān? Have you studied Hadīth? Have you studied jurisprudence?” When he received a positive answer to all questions, he was overjoyed. He realized that this youth was a pious person, so he embraced him and prayed for him. Had there been anything in him which was against the Sharīʿah or against his disposition, e.g. as regards his dress and appearance, he would not have even turned in his direction. We learn from this that sometimes even a lawful action causes doubts in the minds of people. This is how Hadrat Ibrāhīm’s associates developed doubts about him and thought to themselves: Why is he looking at this handsome youngster? Whereas they should not have such doubts because the situation was very close to permissibility.

A shaykh is instructed to be cautious

The above order applies to the murīd. It is also obligatory on the shaykh not to unnecessarily do anything which could cause the murīd to assume that he is doing something against the Sharīʿah. The proof for this is that precaution of this nature is established in the Hadīth. Some people say: “We do not care whether anyone has confidence in us or not. Why should we be concerned about everyone having confidence in us?” Yes, we should certainly not be overly worried about having everyone to have confidence in us, but it is essential to ensure that we do not unnecessarily do something which could be construed as being against the Sharīʿah, and others end up committing the sins of evil thoughts, backbiting and slander.

The Hadīth is as follows: When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was in iʿtikāf, his wife Hadrat Safiyyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* went to visit him. She was sitting with him when two Sahābah passed by. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* stopped them, asked them to wait a bit, sent Hadrat Safiyyah to the house, and called for the two. When they came to him, he said: “That was my wife Safiyyah.” The Sahābah were quite abashed and said: “Allāh forbid, Allāh forbid. O Rasūlullāh! How can we ever have any suspicion about you?” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: “Satan flows within man just as blood flows within his body. I feared Satan whispering certain thoughts into your minds.”

We learn from this that we should not do anything which could cause an observer to have serious doubts or suspicions. Yes, if

people have doubts over trivial matters, these should not be bothered about. It should be borne in mind that this is not to be done by the murīd but by the shaykh. If a person is not one who is looked up to, and his act does not cause people to think of harms, then there is nothing to be bothered about. Ahmad Jām says in a couplet:

> You are a lover. What do you have to worry about becoming a shaykh? Remain a mad-man. If you are destined to join the spiritual lineage, you will join it.
> If not, you will not join it.

One point is essential: When you perceive that you will not be a cause of backbiting, and this applies only when there is no need for that action. If there is a need for it, e.g. for the treatment of the self, then precedence will be given to the advantage of the treatment. When we see certain pious elders doing such things, they were done for the sake of treatment, i.e. to defeat the self through disgrace and castigation.

The harms of having a special associate

A person had come from a distant place and embraced Islam at the hands of Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā went against his principles for the sake of reconciling the person [to Islam] and therefore displayed some consideration to him. He also gave him money for his food and other expenses, and gave him admission in the Madrasah. One day, he left without informing anyone. Hadrat said: "I can specifically recall at least 40 occasions when I went against my principles by giving concessions to certain people and I ended up regretting it. From his interaction I gauged that he wanted to increase his special status with me. Sometimes he sat down to fan me and at other times he would come and sit near me at abnormal times. I eventually said to him: "Brother, I am not in the habit of meeting people at any and every time. You must come here when I call you." Hadrat Wālā added: "Based on the consequences, it is most evil to make someone a special associate. There are many harms in it. One is that the other associates feel offended. The other harm is on the person himself because others will now try to cause harm to him. The third is that people will make him an intermediary for the fulfilment of their needs. This would corrupt his mind. In short, there are many harms in it. This is why one should not accord

special status to anyone nor should anyone desire special status. Just remain an attendant."

"Leave aside others, Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* had an attendant. Although he was an ordinary person, he was considered to be a special attendant. He used to make requests to me, and that too for expensive items. Strictly speaking, I was not even a murīd of Maulānā [Gangohī], although my bond – in fact, intense love for him – was more than his murīds. Anyway, I used to fulfil his requests. Since the dog at the threshold of one's beloved is also beloved, I used to fulfil his requests. And not only in Gangoh, but he used to come here to Thānah Bhawan to ask me. He was indeed observant of tahajjud salāh, dhikr and other spiritual practices. However, he had this illness which developed because of his close proximity [with Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh*]. Similarly, Hājī 'Ābid Husayn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had a close associate. A person wanted to meet Hājī Sāhib, so the associate said: 'Give me one rupee and I will organize for you to meet him.' This person came personally to me and said: 'You have an excellent rule here, you have no obstacles. Anyone can come directly to you. I went to meet Hājī, and his attendant said that he will organize a meeting if I give him one rupee.' This man was a peasant. He said to the attendant: 'I have to see a pious personality. I will go and meet someone else where I do not have to pay one rupee.' This is why the man came here. Although his thought about my being a pious personality was wrong, his thought about not spending a rupee was correct. You see, these are the harms of having a special associate."

I [the compiler say]: On hearing this, a person said: "Hadrat! Even if people were to give your attendants anything they do not accept it. How is it to ask for it?" He replied: "Firstly, they are prohibited from asking. Secondly, they are ashamed for accepting a payment for doing nothing."

The courage for rectification of the self

Someone said: "We take the courage to rectify the self but we are not successful." Hadrat Wālā said: "That is no courage at all, only an intention for courage is made. If a person takes the courage Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly give him success. Allāh *taʿālā* Himself says:

Allāh does not impose on a self except what is within its capacity.

The reason for strictness

Hadrat Wālā said: "My strictness is out of necessity. Do you think I want to be strict? The truth is that sometimes I feel so bad about it that my heart demands on me to ask the person for pardon [for being strict towards him]. However, I do not act on this demand because of the other advantages. It is not that I cannot be lenient. If I were ever to give up this work of rectification, then – Allāh willing – I will show how lenient I can be. I will then be so patient like how I had convinced myself to be patient over the fatwās of unbelief which were issued by the Barelwīs against me. They left no stone unturned and issued so many fatwās against me, but I never felt offended. I am the same person. Why, then, did I remain so unaffected with them while I am so affected here? The reason is that when it came to the Barelwīs I had convinced myself, and here I have not been able to convince myself as yet. Previously I had made an intention that I will not be strict as regards rectification. But my friends themselves insisted. I myself noticed that I can now serve the creation. Whereas previously I had made many changes to the method of rectification.

The criterion for internal conditions and thoughts

Hadrat Wālā was speaking on a certain topic on one occasion when he said: "It is better to be deprived of a spiritual rank than the possibility of doing something against the Sharīʿah. A seeker must disregard a condition which is not in accordance with the Qur'ān and Hadīth. For example, we put some ice in high quality milk and left it aside. But we suspected that a snake came and drank some of that milk. It would be safest to abstain from drinking that milk."

Hadrat Wālā then mentioned a certain shaykh who was misconstruing his thoughts for conditions. He was extremely distressed and had made an intention to come to Hadrat Wālā for solace. Hadrat Wālā said: "When he comes here, I will try to impress this principle in his mind."

The above-mentioned shaykh had conveyed his conditions to another shaykh who was a scholar but the latter said to him: "The solution to such complex conditions can only be found in Thānah Bhawan."

A conversation with a Maulwī Sāhib

Hadrat Wālā said: "A Maulwī Sāhib came to discuss with me when the country was going through a political turmoil. He wanted to speak to me in privacy. I said: 'I will speak in the presence of everyone because by speaking in public, you are in danger for which you are not prepared. And if I speak to you, I am in danger of falling under suspicion [by others] and I am not prepared for this danger.' He was finished by just this one statement."

A reply to a Ra'īs

Hadrat Wālā said: "When I went to Qanūj I was stopped from leaving and had to act against my time table. I said to the people: 'I am prepared to stay over – whether for a week, two weeks, a month, two months, a year or two years. You can stop me from leaving for as long as you want. However, after that I will never return here for the rest of my life.'"

"Similarly, a Ra'īs tried to keep me back by saying: 'Arrangement for a train cannot be made.' I said: 'Allāh *taʿālā* has given me legs. I will leave on foot.' He said: 'It is very far.' I said: 'Yes, from the tribulation.' He then said: 'We will not be able to get the train, there is very little time left.'"

"I said: 'I would prefer not catching the train so that at least I will remember that I had to bear so much of hardship because of my host of a certain place. So now I will never even think of going to that place again."

This brings us to the end of examples of Hadrat Wālā's statements.

Examples of writings

Prelude

Janāb Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib is the head teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr, an erudite scholar, a highly ranked pious elder and from among the senior khulafā' of Hadrat Wālā. He had corresponded on a very formal and strict level with Hadrat Wālā in the line of spiritual rectification. I had acquired his letters about 5-6 years ago, but due to my lackadaisical attitude, they were merely left aside. The good of this was realized when they came to use at the most opportune moment. What I mean is that I consider these letters to be of

such a level that other seekers can use them as examples when undertaking their own rectification. It was therefore considered appropriate to include them verbatim together with Hadrat Wālā's replies, and make them a part of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. Hadrat Wālā gave this section a title which is very appropriate to the Maulānā's name and which also expresses the reality. Hadrat Wālā titled it *'Ibādatur Rahmān* (worshipping The Merciful – the Maulānā's name is ʿAbd ar-Rahmān – the slave of the Merciful). These are quoted below. All these letters have not been published before except for a few which are scattered in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.

ʻIbādatur Rahmān

1st Letter

Condition: In the sanctified service of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat fuyūduhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi taʿālā. I intend entering Hadrat's spiritual family and occupying myself in dhikr and other spiritual practices as per Hadrat's prescription. I therefore request Hadrat to prescribe whatever is suited to my condition. Allāh willing, I will practise diligently on it. That is all.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, may Allāh forgive him.
30 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1347 A.H.

Reply: Maulānā. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi taʿālā. I am not qualified to serve the erudite personalities. At the same time, I have no excuse for not serving them. The fundamental service is to advise. On one side there must be notification of conditions and the other side there must be advice. If this is continued, it is considered to be admission into the spiritual family. Anything more than this will be preferred. Based on this, I am presenting the basics at the very beginning:

1. Start off by reading the section on the course of action for an ʿālim who is occupied from *Qasd as-Sabīl*.
2. Study the *Arbaʿīn* of Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* or its translation, *Tablīgh-e-Dīn* and prepare a list of whatever symptoms you perceive in your self. Thereafter, consult me on one symptom at a time.
3. The previous letter must be sent with the present letter.

Ashraf ʿAlī

Condition: In the sanctified service of Hadrat Maulānā Sāhib Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat barakātuhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi taʿālā. As per your respected instruction, I have commenced with the course of action for an ʿālim who is occupied. In other words, I am reciting the Qur'ān and one manzil of *Munājāt Maqbūl* daily. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am also regular with tahajjud and am also reading the *ism-e-dhāt* – Allāh Allāh – daily. I request Hadrat's duʿā' that Allāh *taʿālā* keeps me occupied in all that pleases Him and protects me from evils. The number of times stipulated for the *ism-e-dhāt* in *Qasd as-Sabīl* is 12 000-24 000. However, when I spoke about this verbally to Hadrat, you said I must start with 6 000 and can increase it later on. I am presently reading it 6 000-8 000 times daily. However, although I do not repeat this dhikr too loudly and incline my head slightly, I get a headache and also perceive a pain in my heart. Kindly inform me what I should do in this regard, Allāh willing, I will practise on what you say.

Reply: Stop saying it loudly and leave out inclining the head.

Condition: All praise is due to Allāh, I am carrying out a major portion of my practices with humility.

Reply: Congratulations.

Condition: As per Hadrat's instruction, I prepared a list of symptoms of the self from *Tablīgh-e-Dīn* and which I am sending for Hadrat's observation. I have listed 16 symptoms. The first symptom is anger. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* when I become angry, neither do I lose control of my self nor am I taken over by a state of madness. Yes, what certainly happens is that the effect of the anger remains in my heart for a long time and due to the excessive anger, I sometimes do not feel like eating and drinking, and my sleep is also disturbed. The heart is overcome by a type of restlessness and worry. I try to focus my heart on something else but fail in this regard. I feel remorse very soon after my anger. I become restless and feel that I must regain the pleasure of the person with whom I got angry as soon as possible. Once I am able to regain his pleasure, the worry and restlessness of the heart decrease. Kindly instruct me on what I should do in this regard.

I request Hadrat to pray for the rectification of my self and for me to remain occupied in doing all that would earn Allāh's pleasure.

That is all. Was salām.
11 Rajab 1347 A.H.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr

Reply: It is obligatory to treat anger which results in sin. As for the effects which you described, these are not sins. It is therefore not obligatory to treat them. However, since you experience a natural aversion and restlessness, you have to follow a programme for it. It is not the job of a rectifier to lay down the programme, any experienced person can describe it. The best thing to do is to separate yourself immediately from the person on whom you vented your anger, and occupy yourself right away with something which brings you joy.

3rd Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas *dāmat fuyūduhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat's prayers, I am carrying out my practices as instructed by Hadrat. I request Hadrat to pray for inspiration to do good deeds.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: Allāh willing, I will practise on Hadrat's treatment for anger which does not result in sin.

Reply: May Allāh make it beneficial.

Condition: If Hadrat could also inform me of the treatment for anger which results in sin so that if this does happen coincidentally, I will be able to act on the prescribed treatment and be able to save myself from those sins.

Reply: The effects of such anger will be within one's control because disobedience is not beyond one's control. Since they are within a person's control, stopping them are also within his control. The fundamental treatment is abstention. However, the following points are useful in helping a person to abstain.

1. Bear in mind the warnings which have been issued against acts of disobedience.
2. Recall your sins and defects and think of what will happen if Allāh *taʿālā* were to take you to task for them.

Think to yourself: Just as I would like Allāh *taʿālā* to pardon me, I must pardon this person as well. Another common procedure is what was mentioned previously.

Condition: I request Hadrat to provide a treatment for the removal of jealousy. Allāh willing, I will practise on it.

That is all. Was salām
26 Rajab 1347 A.H.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr

Reply: I will provide a treatment once you have no more questions about anger.

4th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas *dāmat fuyūduhum*. As-Salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I am carrying out my practices as instructed by Hadrat. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I am inclined to all the practices and carry them out with enthusiasm and interest.

Reply: Congratulations.

Condition: However, I find it heavy on my self to complete the repetition of *ism-e-dhāt*. I carry it out by imposing on my self. I do not carry it out enthusiastically. Is there any harm in this? If there is, I request your prayers for ease in this regard and for a treatment for it.

Reply: Instead of the *ism-e-dhāt*, occupy yourself in *tahlīl* (repeating *Lā ilāha illallāh*).

Condition: I do not have any further questions about anger. Kindly inform me if there are any additional guidelines in this regard. Allāh willing, I will continue practising on them.

Reply: Allāh willing, the procedures which were laid down will suffice.

Condition: Kindly inform me of the procedure to be followed for the removal of jealousy. Allāh willing, I will practise on it. I request Hadrat to pray for inspiration to go good deeds.

Reply: Be kind and affectionate to the person of whom you are jealous. This is a short and effective treatment. It is hoped that a detailed procedure will not be needed.

That is all. Was salām
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.

19 Shaʿbān 1347 A.H.

5th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas *dāmat fuyūduhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am carrying out the practices prescribed by Hadrat, except for the practice of *ism-e-dhāt*. As per Hadrat's instruction, I have commenced with the practice of *tahlīl*. I could not ask Hadrat the number of times it should be repeated. I thought it will be mentioned in *Qasd as-Sabīl* but it is not mentioned there. At present, I am repeating it 3 000-4 000 times. Kindly inform me of Hadrat's instruction in this regard. Allāh willing, I will put it into practice.

Reply: Whatever number you are able to fulfil with continuity.

Condition: Allāh willing, I will practise on Hadrat's prescription for the removal of jealousy. If, due to an impediment, I cannot show kindness and affection to the person of whom I am jealous, e.g. the person is not present but is in some distant place, I do not know him or he is of such a high rank that I do not have the courage to accord kindness to him, then what should I do?

Reply: Speak about his merits in public.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray for inspiration in doing good deeds and for a good death.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: My father and brother are ill since quite some time. I request for Hadrat's prayers for their good health.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sahāranpūrī
9 Ramadān 1347 A.H.

6th Letter

In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā wa Murshidunā *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum ʿalā ru'ūsinā*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh and the blessings of Hadrat's prayers, I am carrying out my practices as instructed by Hadrat. I request Hadrat to pray in my favour that Allāh *taʿālā* inspires me to do good deeds and that He rectifies my character.

Reply: As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rah̲matullāhi wa barakātuh. I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: Allāh willing, I will adhere to H̲ad̲rat Wālā's instructions for the treatment of jealousy. Kindly prescribe a treatment for ostentation. Allāh willing, I will practise on it.

Reply: It will be wiser and easier to first practise on the treatment for jealousy in a few situations. We will then focus on other matters so that if any new matter crops up while treating the old one, we could make a decision at once.

Condition: Sometimes I stop doing an act out of fear that it might amount to ostentation. I had been intending iʿtikāf for this Ramad̲ān but could not carry out my intention for fear of ostentation.

Reply: This should not be done. An absence of intentional ostentation is sufficient. Man is not answerable for more than that.

Condition: If I could be apprised of the overall reality of ostentation (which I could easily apply to individuals) and the occasions when it is blameworthy (i.e. when it is blameworthy according to the Sharīʿah and when it is not, and where it is more blameworthy and where it is less), then it will probably be easy to safeguard myself against such whisperings. Allāh willing, I will practise on whatever H̲ad̲rat instructs.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rah̲mān, Sahāranpūr, Maz̲āhir al-ʿUlūm.

Reply: Allāh willing, I will explain everything. I am waiting for the limit which I mentioned previously. This is more beneficial and better for rectification. If not, I will present [an explanation] whenever you will.

7th Letter

Condition: In the sanctified and lofty company of H̲ad̲rat Aqdas *dāmat fuyūd̲ukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rah̲matullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I am continuing with the practices prescribed by H̲ad̲rat by virtue of the blessings of H̲ad̲rat's prayers.

Reply: Wa ʿalaykumus salām wa rah̲matullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* blesses me with steadfastness on Islam and to rectify this insignificant fellow.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart for blessings and steadfastness.

Condition: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am experiencing full inclination towards all my practices.

Reply: Congratulations.

Condition: I have commenced with the treatment for jealousy as prescribed by Hadrat. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* gives me success.

Reply: May Allāh *taʿālā* make it easy for you.

Condition: Previously I had not been inclined towards repeating the *ism-e-dhāt* and Hadrat replaced it with *tahlīl*. All praise is due to Allāh, through Hadrat's focus, I am really inclined to *tahlīl* but am unable to repeat it more that 1 000-1 200 times.

Reply: It is sufficient.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray for my rectification.

That is all. Was salām
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm
29 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1347 A.H.

Reply: I am praying with my heart and soul. (Ashraf ʿAlī)

8th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat fuyūduhum wa barakātuhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

Reply: Maulānā, as-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh.

Condition: I am practising on Hadrat's instruction with regard to the treatment for jealousy. I have not perceived any new condition as yet.

Reply: In that case, we must now focus on another symptom.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray for me for steadfastness on Dīn and rectification of the self.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: I am fulfilling the practices as instructed by Hadrat. However, the hardness of the heart is as it was in the past. As yet no change has taken place in the condition of the heart.

Reply: You get a natural effect, and you get a rational or creedal and practical effect. The absence of the first does not mean hardness of the heart. Absence of the second means hardness of the heart. This is the criterion.

Condition: However, I consider whatever inspiration I am getting to engage in Allāh's remembrance through Hadrat's blessings to be a boon in itself and a very great favour from Allāh *taʿālā*. If this much is enough, well and good. If not, I will practise on whatever Hadrat instructs me.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr.
22 Dhū al-Hijjah 1347 A.H.

Reply: Persistence in doing good deeds will itself bring progress. I am praying with all my heart. (Ashraf ʿAlī)

9th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Sayyidunā wa Murshidunā Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum wa dāmat barakātukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out the practices which Hadrat prescribed. I request Hadrat's prayers for progress and inspiration to do good.

Reply: My respected brother *dāma fuyūduhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you in your actions and conditions.

Condition: I also request Hadrat to pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to increase my bond and love with Hadrat, and to prescribe a treatment to increase this bond.

Reply: You already have more than the desired love. The love which is hoped for is not desired. This issue falls under the principle: A necessity is estimated according to the extent of the necessity.

Condition: Since a bond and love for the Ahlullāh is a major means for salvation, I requested Hadrat to pray for me in this regard.

Reply: I am praying for the continued existence of this bond and love.

Condition: Kindly provide a treatment for ostentation. Allāh willing, I will act as instructed. Sometimes I leave out an act out of fear of ostentation. I experience whisperings of ostentation in many actions, especially those which are done in public. If I could be apprised of the overall reality of ostentation (which I could easily apply to individuals) and the occasions when it is blameworthy (i.e. when it is blameworthy according to the Sharīʿah and when it is more blameworthy), then it will probably be easy to safeguard myself against such whisperings.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr
6 Muharram 1348 A.H.

Reply: The reality of ostentation is that a person does a Dīnī act for a worldly motive even though that motive may be permissible, or to do a worldly act for an impermissible motive. The meaning of motive in this context is that the act was intended with that motive in mind. You must have gauged from this that ostentation is a controllable act, and that when it is done, it will be done with intent. If an impermissible motive comes unwittingly in the heart and it is not maintained by one's choice, then it is a whispering of ostentation for which a person is rewarded; it is not ostentation which is punishable.

I hope that all misgivings in this regard are now removed.

Was salām.
Ashraf ʿAlī

10th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Sayyidunā wa Murshidunā Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum wa dāmat barakātukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out the practices which Hadrat prescribed. I request Hadrat's prayers for inspiration to do good deeds and abstain from sins. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, many of the whisperings and doubts which I had been experiencing with regard to ostentation have been removed through Hadrat's instruction. Kindly pray that Allāh *taʿālā* gives me total salvation from this ailment.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: However, I have a misgiving about the second meaning of ostentation (i.e. or to do a worldly act for an impermissible motive). I do not understand how this can be included in Sharʿī ostentation. My misgiving will probably be removed if it is explained by an example.

Reply: For example, spending on a large scale for name and fame.

Condition: The reason for my misgiving is that it is already embedded in my mind from before that Sharʿī ostentation refers to doing a Dīnī act for a permissible or impermissible worldly motive, and this act is impermissible solely because of the ostentation in it. Thus, if a worldly act is permissible in itself but is done for an impermissible motive, it will be impermissible not because of ostentation but because of the impermissible motive. This will therefore apply to all permissible actions which lead to evils. I hope Hadrat would write a few words in this regard to put me at ease.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.
3 Safar 1348 A.H.

Reply: The impermissible motive is ostentation in itself, as mentioned in the example. Assuming the ostentation is literal and not Sharʿī, it will still not harm the objective because the objective is the obligation of staying away from sin irrespective of whether it is defined as ostentation or not.

11th Letter

Condition: In the sanctified service of my honourable mentor and master *dāmat fuyūdukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am fulfilling the practices which Hadrat prescribed.

Reply: As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* inspires me to remain steadfast on the Sharīʿah and to rectify my character.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: The misgiving which I had about the meaning of ostentation has been dispelled by Hadrat's explanation. I request Hadrat's prayers that Allāh *taʿālā* saves me from ostentation and removes this ailment from me. The treatment which Hadrat prescribed is sufficient and effective. If Hadrat could provide any additional help in this regard it will make it easy for me to abstain from it.

Reply: Constantly be conscious of:

إن الله ينظر إلى قلوبكم

Surely Allāh is watching your hearts.

This will create self-shame over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* is seeing detestable thoughts in my heart.

Condition: My character is most inappropriate. I request Hadrat's prayers for the rectification of my character.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.
23 Safar 1348 A.H.

Reply: Allāh willing, this thought in itself is akin to a total source of rectification.

12th Letter

Condition: In the sanctified service of my honourable mentor and master *dāmat fuyūdukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat's prayers I am continuing the practices as prescribed by Hadrat.

Reply: As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh to you Maulānā. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you in your practices.

Condition: I request Hadrat's prayers for the rectification of my self, steadfastness on Dīn and a good death.

Reply: I am praying with my heart and soul.

Condition: Allāh willing I will practise as per Hadrat's instruction with regard to ostentation. If Hadrat has any additional guidelines in this regard kindly inform me.

Reply: In most cases, matters are learnt when they are asked about. Less is understood when they are initiated by others.

Condition: I request a treatment for the removal of pride. Allāh willing, I will adhere to it.

Reply: It is dependent on understanding its reality. This will come soon.

Condition: Kindly inform me of the reality of pride so that it is easy for me to apply it to individuals.

Reply: It entails looking down on others and despising them as regards a certain quality which you have and you feel that you have surpassed others in it. The treatment for it is to understand that if it is not within one's control, then there is no reprimand for it provided one does not act on its demands. In other words, one must not even speak about one's own superiority and the inferiority of others. One must not treat others in a despising manner. However, if a person considers this wittingly, or considers it unwittingly but acts wittingly according to its demands, then he is committing pride and is eligible for castigation and punishment. The most helpful treatment for it will be to praise the person verbally and to show him respect when interacting with him.

Condition: Also, kindly tell me the difference between pride, arrogance, love for position, haughtiness and love for popularity.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Raḫmān.
3 Rabīʿ 1348 A.H.

Reply: There is no significant difference. It is similar to the following saying:

عباراتنا شتى، وحسنك واحد

Our ways of expression are different but your beauty is one.

Ashraf ʿAlī.

13th Letter

Condition: In the sanctified service of my honourable mentor and master Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat fuyūdukum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa raḫmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am continuing the practices through Hadrat's focus as far as possible without interruption.

Reply: As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you.

Condition: I request Hadrat’s prayers for steadfastness and a good death.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: I have understood what Hadrat said with regard to pride. I request Hadrat’s prayers for inspiration to practise on it.

Reply: Āmīn.

Condition: If I consider myself to be great or only consider another to be insignificant and despicable (which is based on some excellence in me), will this also be considered to be pride in the Sharīʿah? Will one be taken to task for it?

Reply: This is known as self-conceit which is similar to pride in its prohibition. It is actually the basis for pride.

Condition: Does it have a specific name in the Sharīʿah?

Reply: The first is known as conceit and the second is known as pride.

Condition: If Hadrat has any additional and vital guidelines with regard to ostentation, kindly inform me.

Reply: I cannot think of anything at present.

Condition: Also, kindly inform me if there is anything that would assist me from abstaining from pride.

Reply: Consciousness of your own faults, and consciousness of the excellent qualities of others.

Condition: My father passed away in Rabīʿ al-Awwal and I therefore had to go to my hometown for one month. Kindly pray that Allāh *taʿālā* forgives my father.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān
15 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1348 A.H.

Reply: O Allāh! Forgive him. O Allāh! Have mercy.

Ashraf ʿAlī

Condition: In the sanctified service of Hadrat, *dāmat afdālukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am continuing the practices as far as possible. I request Hadrat's prayers for steadfastness and a good death.

Reply: My respected brother. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: I also request Hadrat's prayers for Allāh *taʿālā* to rectify my evil traits and my spiritual ailments. When I occasionally think about my evil traits and ailments, I become extremely worried. I think to myself: So much of my life has passed and yet there is no rectitude in my character and actions. Pray that Allāh *taʿālā* shows mercy on my condition.

Reply: Āmīn.

Condition: Kindly explain if there are any differences between pride on one hand and haughtiness, love for popularity, love for position, and arrogance on the other hand. If there are any differences between them, kindly provide a treatment for haughtiness and explain its reality to me. If all are the same, kindly provide a combined treatment for all. Allāh willing, I will adhere to it.

Reply: Even though there may be some linguistic differences among them, they are synonyms in our conversations. Even if there is any difference, they can be treated through the treatment for conceit and pride.

Condition: Since I cannot find any other free time for the *ism-e-dhāt*, I have set aside the time after tahajjud until the fajr salāh for it. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the tahajjud salāh is fulfilled with peace and tranquillity, but when it comes to the *ism-e-dhāt*, I am overtaken by sleep most of the time. Consequently, it is not fulfilled peacefully. Kindly inform me what to do in this regard.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.
6 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1348 A.H.

Reply: Do as much as you can do with ease. It will suffice.

Ashraf ʿAlī.

15th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, through Hadrat's focus I am carrying out the practices as prescribed by Hadrat. I request Hadrat to pray for my treatment, steadfastness on Dīn and a good death.

Allāh willing, I will adhere to the treatment which Hadrat prescribed for pride and haughtiness. Pray that Allāh *taʿālā* inspires me to practise and that He rectifies all my ailments.

Kindly provide a treatment for love of wealth and miserliness, through which miserliness may be eradicated. Allāh willing, I will adhere to whatever Hadrat says. Also kindly inform me if all types of love of wealth and miserliness are blameworthy or are there some details in this regard?

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr
26 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1348 A.H.

Reply: If love for wealth is natural, but one does not act on its demands by earning unlawful wealth and holding back from obligations, it is not a sin. If its love is rational and one acts on its previously-mentioned demands, it is a sin. Since acting on its demands is within one's control, its opposite [not acting on its demands] is also within one's control. One has to compel oneself not to act on its opposite. When one does this repeatedly, the demand will weaken. This is its treatment.

16th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of Hadrat *dāmat altāfukum wa ʿammat fuyūdukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, by Hadrat's prayers I am completing the practices which Hadrat prescribed as much as I can. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies me and keeps me occupied in all that pleases Him.

My character is extremely bad and inappropriate. Kindly pray for the rectification of my character. Allāh willing, I will practise on the treatment which Hadrat prescribed for miserliness. Sometimes I find it burdensome on my self to spend. In such a situation, if I were to spend, I will not be rewarded for it because this spending is devoid of sincerity. And if I do not

spend, it will be miserliness. Kindly write something in this regard so that I am put at ease.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Raḫmān, Sahāranpūr, Maẕāhir al-ʿUlūm.
14 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1348 A.H.

Reply: Joyfulness and sincerity are not inseparable. There could be no joyfulness but there is sincerity. One should therefore continue spending.

17th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of Hadrat Aqdas *dāmat afdālukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. By the grace and kindness of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat's prayers, I am carrying out the practices which Hadrat prescribed. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am really inclined to all the practices and carrying them out enthusiastically. This is by virtue of Allāh's kindness and the blessings of Hadrat's focus.

Reply: My respected brother. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. Congratulations.

Condition: Hadrat, kindly pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies this worthless fellow, inspires him to do good deeds, and blesses him with a good death.

Reply: I am praying with my heart and soul.

Condition: Allāh willing I will continue practising on the treatment which Hadrat prescribed for miserliness.

Reply: May Allāh *taʿālā* make it easy.

Condition: Kindly provide a treatment for the removal of love for the world. Allāh willing I will adhere to it.

Reply: Love which is on the level of an inclination is not blameworthy. If one acts on the demands of this inclination and the act is permissible, then only engrossment in that act will be blameworthy. If the act is impermissible, then the act itself will be blameworthy. Engrossment and the action are both within one's control. Acting repeatedly against these two will diminish the inclination. This is its treatment.

Condition: Also, kindly inform me if there is any additional help as regards the repulsing of miserliness.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
17 Rajab 1348 A.H.

Reply: Meditate over and be conscious of the fact that wealth will come to an end while the reward for spending will be perpetual.

18th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat barakātukum wa ʿammat fuyūdukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* by the prayers of Hadrat, I am carrying out the practices as prescribed by Hadrat. Most of the practices are fulfilled with enthusiasm and presence of heart. I am repeating the *tahlīl*[1] as prescribed by Hadrat 1 000 times and sometimes a little more. About half is completed after the maghrib salāh and the remainder after the tahajjud salāh. Although I am inclined to the adhkār, I do not find any change in the condition of my heart in the sense that I do not see any increase in my enthusiasm and love nor any softness in my heart. If this is undesirable, kindly provide a treatment for it. Allāh willing I will practise on it.

Reply: It is not totally undesirable. The fundamental objective is the fundamental reward and pleasure [of Allāh *taʿālā*]. The other things are supplementary to the objective. Their absence should not cause despondency in the least.

Condition: Hadrat, my condition is extremely filthy. Neither are my deeds good nor is my character upright. Pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies my condition and shows mercy on my deplorable condition.

Reply: Allāh willing everything will come in order as you continue striving [in the path of rectification].

Condition: In the treatment for worldly love, Hadrat stated that if the action is permissible, engrossment in it is blameworthy. Kindly explain the Sharʿī meaning of engrossment in the sense that to what extent can we say that there is moderation in an act, and from which point does engrossment commence?

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[1] To say: Lā Ilāha Illallāh.

Reply: Engrossment entails the following: (1) To pay particular attention to a permissible act to the extent that a considerable amount of time is spent in it. (2) To spend such an amount on it that it causes restrictions in the fulfilment of a compulsory act or obligatory duties. (3) The heart becomes occupied in it and ends up neglectful of the Hereafter.

Condition: It will be easier for me to apply the treatment if Hadrat could provide me with a few examples of permissible and impermissible actions.

Reply: Permissible actions include eating, drinking, clothing, etc. Impermissible actions include sins.

Condition: Also, kindly inform me if there is any additional help as regards the treatment for repulsing love for the world.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
8 Shaʿbān 1348 A.H.

19th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas *adāmallahu altāfakum wa ʿamma fuyūdakum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I was put at complete ease by Hadrat's replies to my questions. My condition of despair has been changed to hope. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep Hadrat's shadow over us for a long time and may He enable unworthy people like us to continue benefiting from Hadrat. Allāh willing I will practise on whatever Hadrat prescribed with regard to love for this world.

Reply: Maulānā, as-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. May Allāh *taʿālā* help you.

Condition: Hadrat, pray that Allāh *taʿālā* inspires me to practise and that He rectifies my character and actions.

Kindly provide a treatment for acquiring reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*. The quality of reliance is totally absent in my heart. My gaze is more on the means. I get distressed in the absence of the means and become sorry. It seems as if the heart is totally dependent on the means and nothing else. Hadrat, pray that Allāh *taʿālā* enables me to benefit from Hadrat's general and special blessings.

That is all. Was salām.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm
13 Shaʿbān 1348 A.H.

Reply: This is a natural condition which stems from consideration to the means. There is no blame for such a condition nor is man required to remove it. In fact, such a person is instructed to make the means available so that his heart is not restless. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* stored for an entire year and, in this way, made it a Sunnah.

20th Letter

Condition: My honourable mentor Janāb Hadrat Maulānā Sāhib *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum wa barakātikum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the practices prescribed by Hadrat are being fulfilled most of the time. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* inspires me to do good and rectifies my character. Hadrat did not mention anything about how to acquire reliance on Allāh *taʿālā.* I am therefore requesting a treatment in this regard. Also, kindly provide a treatment whereby I do not focus too much on the means.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.
27 Shawwāl 1348 A.H.

Reply: This [reliance on Allāh] is a rank which is desirable, it is not obligatory. You must complete all obligatory characteristics, and then the time will come to focus on the desirable characteristics. When the time comes you will realize that a major portion of it [reliance] has already been acquired while you were working on the obligatory characteristics. A very small portion which will become firm with the slightest attention will remain. The manner to acquire it will be explained at that time.

21st Letter

Condition: In the blessed and honourable service of our mentor Hadrat Aqdas *adāmallāhu altāfakum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* through the blessings of Hadrat's prayers, I am carrying out the practices prescribed by Hadrat. Kindly pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies this insignificant fellow, keeps him occupied in actions which earn His pleasure, and grants him a good death.

Allāh willing I will practise on what Hadrat said with regard to reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh willing I will make mention of it after completing the acquisition of obligatory characteristics.

Kindly provide a treatment for acquiring Allāh's fear. Allāh's fear is not in my heart. This is resulting in shortcomings in many Sharʿī matters. I hope Hadrat will provide a treatment for it so that I do not fall short in fulfilling my obligations.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān.
11 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1348 A.H.

Reply: Explain fear to me.

22nd Letter

Condition: In the blessed and honourable service of my mentor Hadrat Aqdas *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out the practices prescribed by Hadrat as much as I can. I request Hadrat to pray for the rectification of my self and success in both worlds.

The explanation of fear in my limited understanding is that the greatness and power of Allāh *taʿālā* must have such an impact on the heart that through it there is no deficiency in carrying out obligatory duties, and the heart must have no audacity whatsoever to commit sin without fearing the criticism of anyone.

Reply: Is this "impact" within one's control or out of it? Or, in other words, are we ordered to have it or not ordered? It is obvious that we are ordered to have fear, and when we are ordered to have a thing, it is essentially within our control. Can we then explain it as being out of our control and not what we are ordered to do?

Condition: [My limited explanation] is attested by:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اقْسِمْ لَنَا مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ مَا تَحُوْلُ بِهِ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ مَعَاصِيْكَ

O Allāh! Give us such a portion of Your fear whereby it would come as a barrier between us and committing acts of disobedience against You.

Reply: Is a wilful intent and choice a prerequisite for this condition to settle in the heart?

Condition: I am completely devoid of this type of fear. Very often, compulsory duties are left out over the most trivial reasons, and my self starts to fabricate excuses and explanations. For example, if I am travelling by train and the coach is crowded, and it is difficult to get off; then the doors of ruses and excuses open in the self and I do not perform my salāh. Similarly, if there is a critical occasion to enjoin good and the opposition is in the majority, the self will provide some excuse and the duty of enjoining good is discarded. Some places do not fulfil the criteria for the validity of jumuʿah salāh. There is a slight fear of harm or possibility of benefit, and so the self will provide explanations and reasons and thereby cause me not to perform the jumuʿah salāh. Based on all this, kindly provide a treatment whereby I am not found wanting in carrying out these matters of the Sharīʿah.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
28 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1348 A.H.

Reply: I will reply to the above points after you answer my questions which I posed above.

23rd Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of my mentor Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat fuyūdukum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I request Hadrat to pray for my rectification and a good death.

Reply: My respected brother! As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: The effect which Hadrat wrote in the explanation of fear is certainly not within one's control, and the explanation of fear as being within one's control is incorrect. This is my error. However, I do not know of any meaning wherein the explanation of fear is comprehensive and also all-embracing. I request Hadrat to explain it to me and to provide me with a treatment.

What I do know is that the effects of fear are not in my heart whereby I could know the removal of fear.

O Allāh! Give us such a portion of Your fear whereby it would come as a barrier between us and committing acts of disobedience against You.

In this invocation, a will and a choice are prerequisites for it [fear] to settle in the heart. I hope Hadrat will treat me.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
25 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1348 A.H.

Reply: The possibility of reprimand and punishment for committing a wrong is the basis of fear. To be conscious of this is within one's control. Similarly, acting on its demands, i.e. abstaining from sin, is also within one's control. Initially, a bit of pain and discomfort are experienced when abstaining from sin. However, once it is repeated, it decreases and becomes part of one's habit. It then becomes easy for the person to abstain from sin. I hope you will also get answers for your remaining questions from this explanation.

Ashraf ʿAlī

24th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *mudda fuyūdukum*. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out the practices as prescribed by Hadrat most of the time. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies this most worthless fellow. I understood what Hadrat said with regard to fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. Bearing in mind that I have no fear whatsoever of Allāh *taʿālā* in my heart and that there is immense weakness and cowardice, I request Hadrat to pray for me in this regard. Also, inform me of the procedures to be followed in order to develop Allāh's fear.

Reply: What? Does the heart not even believe in the possibility of being reprimanded or punished for sins? Since this possibility is certainly found in every believer, you have acquired fear. Consciousness of this possibility and continuous abstention from sin will enable you to develop complete fear.

Condition: I generally miss out my practices completely or partially while on a journey, and occasionally while I'm at home. How should I recompense for them?

That is all. Was salām.

ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
2 Muharram 1349 A.H.

Reply: Fulfil them by reducing the amount.

25th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Janāb Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat altāfukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out as much as possible the practices prescribed by Hadrat. I request Hadrat to pray for my rectification and success. Allāh willing I will practise on whatever Hadrat prescribed with regard to fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* creates His fear in my heart. Kindly note anything that would assist in developing fear of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Reply: The same [previously-mentioned] continuous abstention from sin is the strongest aid.

Condition: Kindly provide a treatment for developing patience in the heart. Also inform me of the Sharʿī reality of patience. My heart is immensely disturbed by calamities, hardships and difficulties. These cause me restlessness and worry. I hope Hadrat would provide a treatment for this.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr.
24 Muharram 1349 A.H.

Reply: Let it first establish itself and become firmly embedded.

26th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of Janāb Hakīmul Ummat *dāmat fuyūdukum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the practices prescribed by Hadrat are being fulfilled most of the time.

Reply: As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you in them.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies me and keeps me eternally occupied in all that pleases Him.

Reply: Āmīn.

Condition: Kindly provide a treatment for the development of patience. The hearts finds it extremely burdensome to bear hardships. In fact, when I have to face any matter which is

against my temperament, it creates restlessness and agitation in my heart. This results in various types of whisperings entering the heart. I hope Hadrat would provide a treatment for this.

Reply: Neither is the cause reprehensible nor the effect. Both are beyond one's control. The principle is:

ولا يذم ما لا اختيار فيه

Man is not reproached for what is not within his choice.

This is why there is no need for any treatment. However, it is reprehensible to wittingly transgress the limits of the Sharīʿah. This is what is known as impatience.

Condition: Also inform me of its Sharʿī reality.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr.
6 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1349 A.H.

Reply:

حبس النفس على ما تكره عما يكره شرعًا

Restraining the self from what it dislikes as regards what is reprehensible in the Sharīʿah.

27th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of my mentor *dāmat barakātuhum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out my practices through Hadrat's prayers. I request Hadrat to pray for steadfastness and a good death for me. Although restlessness and natural agitation are not reprehensible in the Sharīʿah, the self is discomforted by these feelings.

Reply: The treatment for this discomfort is beyond the object of this field.

Condition: The discomfort sometimes causes interruptions in the fulfilment of Dīnī obligations and duties.

Reply: Are the interruptions within your control or beyond?

Condition: I request Hadrat to write something in this regard so that I may feel at ease.

Reply: I have already done that above.

Condition: Certain calamities are generally heavy on the heart, e.g. the death of one's parents or children. If a person does not feel grieved over their death due to hard-heartedness, then he will obviously not feel any pain, there will be no need for him to exercise patience, and he will not be rewarded. How can such a person acquire reward? Or will he be deprived of the reward for patience over this calamity?

Reply: He must make a firm intention that when he is afflicted by a calamity, he will remain patient. This too is enough for acquiring the reward for patience.

Condition: Does *habs* (restraint) only mean that a person must save himself from terror, fright and statements which are against the Sharīʿah, or does it mean something else?

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr.
26 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1349 A.H.

Reply: Yes.

28th Letter

Condition: My respected and honourable Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. Interruptions in fulfilling Sharʿī duties at the time of calamities are sometimes within my control.

Reply: *Jāmiʿ al-kamālāt dāma faydukum*. It is within one's control to make up for them, so you ought to do it.

Condition: Sometimes they are not within my control in the sense that the heart is caught up in such a grief that it does not focus on anything else because of neglect and inattention.

Reply: So there is no Dīnī harm in it. It is also important to save one's self from such harm.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies this worthless fellow.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart for your rectification.

Condition: I am carrying out the practices as prescribed by Hadrat. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* they are diligently completed most of the time. However, the hardness of my heart

is as it had always been. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies my heart.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr.
3 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1349 A.H.

Reply: The word "hardness" also needs to be explained.

Ashraf ʿAlī.

29th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Maulānā Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out the practices prescribed by Hadrat most of the time and without missing them out.

Reply: Maulānā *dāma faydahum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray for the rectification of my heart and a good death. I hope Hadrat will remember this worthless fellow in his prayers.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: Allāh willing I will practise on Hadrat's instructions with regard to patience. Hadrat, pray that I receive inspiration to do good deeds.

Reply: Āmīn.

Condition: Kindly provide a treatment for gratitude to Allāh *taʿālā* over His bounties.

Reply: A treatment is for the removal [of an illness]. This [gratitude] is something which is to be acquired and is within one's control. Making use of one's choice is the way of acquiring it.

Condition: Also explain to me the Sharʿī reality of gratitude.

Reply: Any condition which is in line with one's temperament – whether within one's control or not – must be considered to be a favour of Allāh *taʿālā* from one's heart. One must be happy over it, deem it to be more than what one deserves, praise Allāh *taʿālā* verbally for it, and abstain from using that bounty in sin with one's limbs. This is the reality of gratitude.

Condition: The meaning of "hardness" is that there is no inclination towards obedience.

Reply: Is it through natural or intentional consciousness of it?

Condition: The committing of sins does not cause any abhorrence.

Reply: Is it through natural or intentional consciousness of it?

Condition: Furthermore, reading or listening to the texts where promises are mentioned and warnings are issued does not cause any softness in the heart.

Reply: Is it through natural or intentional consciousness of it?

Condition: In fact, sometimes, obligatory duties are carried out of fear for people and their castigation and criticism.

Reply: This is obviously ostentation.

Condition: Similarly, abstention from sins is out of fear of people.

Reply: This is also ostentation.

Condition: I hope Hadrat will provide a treatment for this.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.

Reply: The reality of "hardness" has not been clarified as yet.

30th Letter

Condition: In the service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I also intended asking about the treatment for acquiring gratitude. I hope Hadrat will describe the method of acquiring it and what will aid in acquiring it.

Reply: Wa ʿalaykumus salām wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. The parts of its nature comprise wholly of actions which are within one's control. This must be repeatedly done. This is the method of its acquisition and the way of making it easy.

Condition: By hardness I am referring to how we see some people crying in salāh, crying while reading the Qur'ān, or becoming soft-hearted and reduced to tears when they hear terrifying themes in a lecture. I neither cry in salāh nor do I experience any softness of heart when listening to the Qur'ān.

If this condition is not praiseworthy, I request Hadrat to prescribe a treatment.

Reply: These matters are not within one's control and it is not established with certainty that they are not praiseworthy.

Condition: I neither have a natural inclination towards acts of obedience nor can I realize it by being wilfully conscious about them. Similarly, I do have a natural abhorrence for sins.

Reply: Natural inclination and abhorrence are not required. Creedal inclination and abhorrence are enough, and this is what we are ordered to have. By acting on their demands repeatedly, a natural inclination and abhorrence can be developed. If this does not happen, it is still not harmful.

Condition: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the practices are carried out enthusiastically most of the time. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat's prayer, I experience considerable enthusiasm especially at tahajjud time. I request Hadrat to pray for the rectification of my self and success in both worlds.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.

Reply: Maulānā, As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. I had many guests so I could not find a quiet time to reply. I was waiting for such a time so that I could reply to you. Even now I do not have that time, but I am writing to avoid keeping you waiting.

31st Letter

Condition: In the respected service of my mentor *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I understood whatever Hadrat wrote about gratitude. By the grace and kindness of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat's prayers, I am practising on most of the parts of gratitude.

Reply: May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray for the rectification of my self, that I am able to carry out Allāh's orders and abstain from His prohibitions. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat's prayers, most of my practices are completed daily. I request Hadrat to pray for my steadfastness.

Reply: I am praying with my heart and soul.

Condition: I request Hadrat to provide me with a treatment and an easy method for acquiring asceticism, and to also explain its Sharʿī nature.

Reply: It essentially entails a reduced desire for the world. This quality is acquired by meditating over the fleeting nature of this world, and for an absence of engrossment in acquiring unnecessary things of this world. An easy way of acquiring it is to remain in the company of ascetics and to study their lives.

Condition: I intend visiting Hadrat next Friday, if Hadrat permits.

Reply: By all means.

Condition: I am, until now, deprived of having the honour of pledging bayʿah to Hadrat. If Hadrat considers it appropriate, I would like to be honoured with the honour of bayʿah when I visit Hadrat.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
9 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1349 A.H.

Reply: There is no real need, but I also do not have any reason for declining your order.

32nd Letter

Condition: In the service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu azlālakum ʿalaynā wa ʿalā sā'iril mustarshidīn.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am carrying out Hadrat's prescribed practices by virtue of Hadrat's prayers. I also commenced the practice of pondering and reflecting on the Qur'ān as instructed by Hadrat. I have set aside the time after ʿishā for this. I request Hadrat to pray for my internal and external rectification, steadfastness on acts of obedience and all that would earn Allāh's pleasure.

Reply: May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you. I am praying with my heart and soul.

Condition: I have full hope in Allāh *taʿālā* that He would rectify this worthless fellow through Hadrat's prayers and focus – Allāh willing.

Reply: I am nothing. However, I have full hope in Allāh's grace and mercy – Allāh willing.

Condition: Allāh willing I will practise on whatever Hadrat said with regard to the acquisition of asceticism. I request Hadrat to pray for inspiration to do good.

Kindly explain the Sharʿī realities of sincerity and devotion, and a treatment and help for their acquisition.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
28 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1349 A.H.

Reply: Sincerity entails the choosing of the level of perfection in whichever act of obedience one intends to do. Devotion entails not making a non-act of obedience the objective in that act of obedience. This is dependent on understanding the basis of that act's perfection, and also knowing what a non-act of obedience is. After this, it is only the intention and action that remain. Both these are within one's control. The method of acquiring them must have been understood from this explanation. As for what would aid in acquiring them, it entails consciousness of Allāh's promises and warnings, and meditating over one's intention.

33rd Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum ilā yaumil qiyāmah*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

I understood whatever Hadrat said about sincerity and devotion. However, if Hadrat could explain their realities with examples, it would be easier to apply.

Reply: An example of devotion is to perform salāh in exactly the manner which the Sharīʿah refers to as a perfect salāh. In other words, to perform it with the physical and spiritual etiquette. The same can be said of all other acts of obedience which the Sharīʿah considers to be performed on the level of perfection. An example of sincerity is there must be no intention of ostentation in salāh because ostentation is not an act of obedience. There must be no intention of pleasing anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. If there is such an intention, it is an act of disobedience.

Condition: Is there any difference between humility and submission in sincerity?

Reply: Sincerity is related to intention, while humility and submission refer to the tranquillity of the heart and body parts and heart from disliked physical or spiritual movements, even though the intention in these actions is not for disobedience. Thus, sincerity can be different from humility.

Condition: If one intends doing a certain act of obedience, can the intention for another act of obedience affect the sincerity of the first act?

Reply: Clarify the question with an example.

Condition: Also explain meditation over an intention.

Reply: In other words, one must check to see if one's intention is not a disobedience.

Condition: What is the way of repulsing whisperings of disobedience which are experienced unwittingly at the time of making an intention?

Reply: Whisperings do not affect sincerity. First of all, they are not within one's control. Secondly, this is not the objective of salāh.

Condition: At the time when I make intention to perform salāh – i.e. a few moments before the takbīr-e-tahrīmah, I try to disallow whisperings of disobedience to enter the heart, but I am not successful.

Reply: No wrong has been committed. You have already learnt above that whisperings do not negate sincerity. However, if they are wittingly brought, they would negate devotion. If they are unwitting, they will not even negate devotion.

Condition: Sometimes I end up stopping the takbīr-e-tahrīmah, I have to renew my intention, and renew my consciousness on the assumption that the intention for the takbīr-e-tahrīmah was invalid and there was no firm determination. Or it was because I had not focussed on the takbīr-e-tahrīmah.

Reply: This is harām. An intention is an action which is within one's control. When making an intention, you cannot wilfully turn your focus towards something else. If it is unwittingly done, it does not negate the intention.

Condition: This is why I request Hadrat to provide a treatment.

Reply: I have explained everything above.

Condition: I request Hadrat to pray for this worthless fellow, that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies me internally and externally, and confers His special proximity to me.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
8 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1349 A.H.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

34th Letter

Condition: In the blessed service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* many of my doubts have been removed through Hadrat's statements. May Allāh *taʿālā* shadow us with Hadrat's presence and Hadrat's blessings forever. However, in explaining the difference between sincerity and humility, Hadrat said "even though the intention in these actions is not for disobedience". My confusion here is that when there can be no intention of obedience in those disliked actions, the intention in both cases will be one of disobedience.

Reply: It is not necessarily the case but it is possible that a person does not even have an intention of doing a certain thing – he is merely doing it as a futile action which stems out of disregard or as a result of habit. This is irrespective of whether it is an action of the body parts or of the heart.

Condition: I request Hadrat to clarify it further so that no doubt remains.

Reply: I have explained it above.

Condition: What if while carrying out an act of obedience there is no intention of an act of disobedience, but an intention of another act of obedience? For example, while performing salāh there is no intention of ostentation nor of any other act of disobedience, but one wittingly delves into a matter of the Sharīʿah while in salāh or wilfully thinks of the arrangements that he has to make for a lawful journey?

Reply: This is a complex issue and I have explained it in the light of the principles. I can think of two Aḫādīth at present. One of them is a *marfūʿ* Ḫadīth in which the following words are mentioned:

صلى ركعتين مقبلا عليهما بقلبه

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam performed two rakʿats of salāh with his heart focussed on them.

The other is a *mauqūf* Ḫadīth containing a statement of Ḫaḏrat ʿUmar *raḏiyallāhu ʿanhu* in which he says:

إني لأجهز جيشي وأنا في الصلوة

I make preparations for my army while I am in s̱alāh.

If we look at both narrations collectively, we deduce two levels of devotion. One is that when a person is occupied in a certain act of worship, he does not wittingly think of any other act even if the latter is an act of obedience. The second level is that he thinks of the other act of obedience, but both acts are such that the second act of obedience is not intended to be fulfilled through the first one. For example, his purpose of performing s̱alāh is not to have a devoted time wherein he can prepare an army without any disturbance. The essence of devotion is equally found in both, there is no doubt about it. Certain impediments or factors caused a difference. The first level is more perfect, and the second level – if done without a valid reason – is less perfect. If there is a valid reason for it, it will also be perfect – as was the case with Ḫaḏrat ʿUmar *raḏiyallāhu ʿanhu.* The criterion for this is Ijtihād, but this is not completely against devotion in every situation. However, as to whether it is against devotion in s̱alāh or not, this is a natural matter. I am inclined to think that in the case where there is a valid excuse, it is also not against devotion in s̱alāh. If necessary, you can apply your question to the above explanation.

Condition: Alternatively, take the case of performing s̱alāh solely with the intention that a person who does not know how to perform s̱alāh will observe how I am performing it and then correct his own s̱alāh in this way. Does intending such acts of obedience in s̱alāh affect one's sincerity?

Reply: From the s̱alāh itself we can say that something other than s̱alāh is intended. It could be construed as a negation of

sincerity. However, I am inclined to make a differentiation, viz. it does not negate sincerity for the Promulgator because in such an instance it is considered to be propagation [teaching of Dīn]. But it is incautious for the non-promulgator. And if it is specifically for the purpose of teaching salāh, there is nothing wrong with it.

Condition: After commencing my salāh I, for example, thought to myself that I do not know if my intention was for a Sharʿī salāh at the time of takbīr-e-tahrīmah. I doubted the very takbīr-e-tahrīmah and was not sure if I said *Allāhu Akbar*. In other words, I completely forgot about the intention and the takbīr-e-tahrīmah. What should I do in such a case? I request Hadrat to say something in this regard. Is meditation over the intention the treatment for this or is there something else?

Reply: This is a juristical issue. Refer to the traditions which contain these minute details.

Condition: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am completing my daily practices through the blessings of Hadrat's prayers.

Reply: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Condition: Hadrat, pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies this worthless fellow and beautifies his internal and external life in accordance with all that pleases Him.

Reply: Āmīn.

Condition: I intend to visit Hadrat on Friday, 22 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah if Hadrat permits.

Reply: By all means.

Condition: On several occasions I felt that I ought to present something small to Hadrat as a gift. However, since it is against Hadrat's blessed temperament, I did not have the courage to present it nor the nerve to mention it. This is why I am requesting that if Hadrat permits, I would like to bring a gift to Hadrat which would cost only two rupees (and which Hadrat would approve of). If my coming is deferred for some reason, I will send it with someone who is Hadrat's attendant.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.
15 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1349 A.H.

Reply: I have my reservations but at the same time I would not want to be deprived of an item that is blessed by yourself. I cannot think of any item which I would like. I will say this without informality that cash will be better, but half of it, i.e. just one rupee.

35th Letter

Condition: In the service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum wa afāda ʿalaynā barakātikum.* As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am completing my practices by virtue of Hadrat's focus.

Reply: Maulānā, as-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you.

Condition: Hadrat, kindly pray that Allāh *taʿālā* rectifies me and inspires me to remain occupied in all that pleases Him.

Reply: I am praying with all my heart.

Condition: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, through the blessings of Hadrat's teachings of sincerity and devotion, I have acquired total tranquillity. In fact, many other unrelated doubts and misgivings were solved.

Reply: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Condition: Kindly provide a treatment for acceptance of Allāh's decree, its criterion and its extent. To what extent is man accountable for it and what is its Sharʿī definition and meaning?

That is all. Was salām.
28 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1349 A.H.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Sahāranpūr, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm.

Reply: The reality of acceptance of Allāh's decree is to abstain from objecting to His decree. If a person does not even perceive a pain, the acceptance is natural. If the feeling of the pain remains, acceptance is rational. The first is a condition for which a servant is not accountable. The second is a station for which man is accountable. The method of acquiring it is to be conscious of Allāh's mercy and wisdom in incidents which are against one's temperament.

Ashraf ʿAlī.

36th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* through the blessings of Hadrat's prayers, I complete my practices most of the time. I request Hadrat to pray for my steadfastness and inspiration to do good deeds.

I understood whatever Hadrat said with regard to acceptance of Allāh's decree. Kindly pray that I am able to practise on it.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that the necessary sections of the symptoms of the self (which were compiled from *Tablīgh-e-Dīn* as per Hadrat's instruction) have been presented in the blessed service of Hadrat. I request Hadrat to pray that Allāh *taʿālā* inspires me to practise on Hadrat's teachings, rectifies me and blesses me with a good death. This worthless fellow cannot fulfil the thanks which are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for His favours and Hadrat's focus through which I had the honour of corresponding and speaking with Hadrat, and was thereby able to engage in Allāh's remembrance. All praise is due solely to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Reply: I am happier than you. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless you and keep you steadfast day after day.

Condition: I am including an old letter wherein Hadrat had explained the method of teaching the desirable ranks. I hope Hadrat will say something in this regard so that it becomes easy to practise on the obligatory duties.

6 Rajab 1349 A.H.

Reply: Desirable reliance [on Allāh *taʿālā*] needs two things: (1) a natural strength of heart, (2) an absence of responsibility for obligatory duties. In the same way there must be no one who has rights over you. Are these prerequisites found in you?

37th Letter

Condition: In the respected service of Hadrat Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat *adāmallāhu fuyūdakum*. As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am completing my practices through Hadrat's prayers. I request Hadrat to pray for me for steadfastness, a good death and inspiration to do good deeds.

My reply to Hadrat's question is that neither do I have the desirable reliance, strength of heart nor people who do not have rights over me. My heart is extremely weak. Those who have rights over me are also not strong hearted nor are they those who do not demand their rights. Hadrat can please inform me what to do in this regard.

That is all. Was salām.
ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.
13 Rajab 1349 A.H.

Reply: Suffice with the obligatory, pray for more but do not intend it yourself.

14th Fragment: Obliterating One's Self Before One's Elders

Quite some time ago Hadrat Wālā admonished a person for – most probably – agreeing with Hadrat Wālā over something which he said in his assembly. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "I have been observing you for quite some time and I see that you do not have the quality of self-obliteration at all in you. When sitting in an assembly, you must obliterate yourself completely. When you believe someone to be your senior, you must not even feel that you are worthy of agreeing [or attesting to] what he says. Only a person who feels that he is somebody will attest to the statements of others."

Note: I [the compiler] recall the following couplets over the above statement of Hadrat Wālā:

> It is most strange that my existence remains when you are present. That you come in to say something and my words also remain! You must consider yourself to be a speck of dust in the assembly where the sun is. It is disrespectful to consider yourself to be great.

However, if it is gauged from the situation that you have the permission to address the person who is addressing you, there will be no harm in speaking according to necessity.

15th Fragment: An Intellectual's Article On Hadrat Wālā's System of Rectification

I [the compiler] conclude this chapter on miscellaneous aspects with an article written by an erudite scholar who is an expert in the fields of psychology and politics, and has pledged bayʿah to another shaykh.

The above scholar came to the Khānqāh about a year ago and was staying with me in my room. At the time, I was about to commence the chapter on spiritual instruction. I was extremely hesitant to start this chapter bearing in mind its importance and my incapability. I was thinking to myself: How can someone like me write on such an important topic? This scholar also emphasised on me the importance of this chapter and why special attention should be given to writing it. He stressed that Hadrat Wālā's distinguished rank in the field of spiritual instruction and rectification must be demonstrated, and the misunderstandings which short-sighted people have in this regard must also be removed.

I replied by expressing by lack of resources and incompetence. During the same time, he had spent some time in privacy with Hadrat Wālā and received most satisfactory answers from him with regard to his spiritual conditions. He had mentioned how impressed he was by Hadrat Wālā's answers. I spontaneously said to him: "What qualification do I have? This work has to be done by scholars. Māshā Allāh, you are a man of virtue and excellence. If you pen whatever unique qualities of Hadrat Wālā you observed from his past and present teachings and statements in the field of education and rectification, I will include them in the biography."

He replied with much enthusiasm: "Look! Allāh willing, I will write something down if I can and send it to you." The Maulānā then departed and the matter was forgotten. However, I now learnt that the Maulānā was an embodiment of the saying:

الكريم إذا وعد وفٰى

When a nobleman makes a promise, he keeps to his word.

He stored this conversation which we had in passing in a corner of his mind. Now, I have completed *Ashraf as-Sawānih* by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and because my leave is almost over,

I have only about 7-10 days when I have to sorrowfully bid farewell to the Khānqāh.

The unique feature of the article

The Maulānā prepared a concise but comprehensive article which is both scholarly and investigative, and is like a priceless essence of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*. He sent it to me and wrote: “When I proof read this article before my departure, I can say without exaggeration that I find it far below Ḫaḏrat [Wālā’s] distinguished position. Had my shame not imposed on me to acknowledge it, I would have never sent it to you. However, I was not deprived of any benefit [in writing it] because at least that much of time was spent in thinking of Ḫaḏrat [Wālā].”

By giving this article to me, the Maulānā fulfilled - to a certain extent – my wish that some scholars should recompile *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ* all over again in a more scholarly manner. This request of mine has also been mentioned in the conclusion of this book. The reader will see it there. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Whatever theme the Maulānā discussed concisely in his article has been – by the help and grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – presented in detail by myself even though it may be in an unscholarly style. All the chapters of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ* are now completed and closed. The Maulānā wrote his scholarly article which also contains the sweetness of contemporary creative writing with honesty and sincerity. This useful article is like a “manual of guidance” for the heedless ones. It demands that his article be made a part and parcel of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*. In this way, it will serve as a summary and as an affirmation by a non-disciple scholar of whatever I wrote which could be construed as a biased account written by a disciple. The natural temperament of a non-disciple scholar will essentially have a critical view and be cautious in having an opinion. In the same article, the Maulānā goes to the extent of writing that “those who know this writer know how distant he is from overpowering faith and how maligned he is for his critical eye.”

On one hand we see this powerful testimony [in favour of Ḫaḏrat Wālā]. Then we see his general acceptance by every strata of society and how his followers, opponents, associates and non-associates acknowledge his academic and practical excellences with their hearts and tongues. Furthermore, we

saw how he is generally accepted as the Hakīmul Ummat and Mujaddidul Millat. Testimonies in his favour by the masses and elite have been presented to the reader at different places. Testimonies of certain contemporary seniors were mentioned in this chapter under the heading "9th Fragment". Therefore, if an ignorant, unconvinced or ill-informed person feels that what I wrote in *Ashraf as-Sawānih* with reference to Hadrat Wālā's excellent qualities is a biased account written by a disciple, then he can think like that. However, he cannot disregard all these impartial testimonies, and this mad lunatic [the compiler is referring to himself] is compelled to say this well-known couplet in his state of fervour and intoxicated zeal:

> I had also given my life. O advisor, how improper, was I the only insane person with no other insane people in the world!?

A committee of barristers is impressed by this article

I had quoted the same couplet with the same zeal and fervour before those members of the Waqf Committee who had come to discuss the endowment laws with Hadrat Wālā and had left highly impressed by him. They had unanimously testified – in abstentia – that they never knew such a personality existed among the 'ulamā'.

On one side we had this committee consisting of many expert linguists, well-known senior barristers and lawyers, affluent and powerful modernists including a few who belonged to the Shī'ah faith. On the other side there was just Hadrat Wālā who was there to reply to their critical and analytical questions. When a few scholars wanted to accompany Hadrat Wālā, he said: "No. It would be best for me to go alone so that they do not think that such a large number of Maulwīs have come to face them. This would mark the denigration of the Maulwīs. Moreover, if I took all of you and we are defeated, all the Maulwīs will be maligned and humiliated. If I alone am defeated, it will not be too serious because even if they defeated one person, it will not be considered to be a great feat. On the other hand, if I am victorious, it will be a great honour for the Maulwīs."

This was certainly an advantageous point. However, the actual reason for not taking any other scholar was that Hadrat Wālā was not intimidated by the popularity, competence and

authority of these members. He had full confidence in Allāh's help. He believed that – Allāh willing – he alone will suffice against them. Consequently – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – this is exactly what happened. By Allāh's help, Hadrat Wālā alone was enough for them. They all had to acknowledge Hadrat Wālā's spontaneous responses, civilized nature, firmness, capability and principled manner of speech.

A few details with reference to the conversation between Hadrat Wālā and this committee of barristers were given previously under the heading Makārim ʿAsharah.

Most of these members were informally known to me. In fact, some of them had been my class mates. They used to occasionally pick out on me for having given up my job as a deputy collector and my previous manner of dressing despite looking up to me with much respect and confidence. When I saw how impressed they were by Hadrat Wālā, I felt it was an ideal opportunity for me. The moment the session was over and Hadrat Wālā left, I stood before all of them and read this couplet with full enthusiasm and zeal:

> I had also given my life. O advisor, how improper, was I the only insane person with no other insane people in the world!?

Bearing in mind that this couplet was most appropriate to the occasion and a reflection of their condition, they were immensely affected by it. All the members were standing in a circle and swaying, while I was reciting the couplet like a madman. When I was saying these words: "with no other insane people in the world", I was waving my hand at each one of them. In short, it was a unique feeling whose joy could only be appreciated by those who were present at the time.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā made a great impact and impression on this assembly of notable free thinkers. I am spontaneously made to recall this couplet which applies totally to Hadrat Wālā:

> He intoxicates hundreds of people with a single glance. No matter which assembly he goes to, he reduces it to a tavern.

I also recall my own couplets:

> So what if Majdhūb is madly in love with him!? Look at the entire world – it has become his moth [a moth is always attracted to light].
>
> Your remembrance is constantly on my tongue. I am mentioning your name here, and I am mentioning it there.
>
> Every discerning person is becoming devoted to you. Immature is the one who has evil thoughts about you.
>
> If this is a foolish statement of Majdhūb, why is the entire world joining me in saying the same thing?

This discussion became long unintentionally. I now come back to my senses and present the article of the learned scholar regarding whom I said something previously as a prelude to the reader.

The title of the article and the name of the writer

Although this biography has ended by the help and grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, this chapter on miscellaneous issues is a chapter in which no specific theme is laid down. This is why the article under discussion can be included here without any hesitation. Bearing in mind that it is like a gist of the entire biography, it would be best to give it a place in the last part of this last chapter. This is what is being done. In our hope that it will be of eternal benefit, it is given the title *al-Fayd̲ al-Jārī* (Continuous Blessing). However, since it has been the practice in this biography not to divulge the identities of people unnecessarily, the name of the learned scholar is also not divulged. The article is as follows.

Al-Fayd̲ al-Jārī

When we have the occasion to read or hear about the lives and conditions of the pious people of the past, then in most cases we assume that they are tales related by their disciples, and that it seems as though there are many additions to the original [incident]. However, this was an assessment of my self. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I was able to visit and meet such pious personalities who were all unique in their own ways, and regarding whom the most capable biographer will fall short in fulfilling their right. My heart is still telling me the

same about the past elders that the original will remain the original, and the same can never be said about the copy.

The biography of Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī (may Allāh bless him with long life) is presently being compiled by the "Amīr Khusro"[1] of our court and our Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib. Khwājah Sāhib is a poet and a very capable one at that. Add to this his faith and confidence in Hadrat Maulānā [Hadrat Wālā] which are on the level of infatuation. However, lovers have many ways and habits for which there are no names. What name will we be able to give to the power of expression of Khwājah Sāhib or anyone else? Eventually we will also have to say that the fact of the matter is that the right was not fulfilled.[2]

Since several years this unworthy writer has the fortune of presenting himself in the service of Hadrat Maulānā almost every year. On each of my visits I perceived that if the thirsty souls are not invited to the fountain of instruction and guidance which is flowing from Thānah Bhawan by penning details about his life, then it will be a major "pen" crime. However, whenever I raise my pen, the reach of my eye is constrained and the beauty of the roses held back my hand. I was not commanded and ordered by anyone; it was a thought in my heart which I could not carry out, so I kept silent.

My last visit was exactly at the time when Khwājah Sāhib was living in the Khānqāh and was fully occupied in this task [of writing this biography]. Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows what he was thinking when he asked me several times to take the opportunity of joining him. I agreed verbally out of a bit of desire to obtain this good fortune, and more out of the desire to "include myself among the martyrs merely by pasting some

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[1] When I saw Khwājah Sāhib the first time in the assembly of Hadrat [Wālā], my mind immediately went to the bond which existed between Hadrat Sultānjī and Amīr Khusro *rahimahumallāh*. Note from the compiler: May Allāh *taʿālā* make me exactly as he thinks of me, and may Allāh *taʿālā* bless me with a genuine bond, total love and total affinity with Hadrat Wālā.

[2] Note from the compiler: When one who has the power of expression cannot fulfil the right [of writing this biography], this ignorant and dumb person [referring to himself] will be even more incapable. I myself observed my own incapability and made mention of it in the foreword to this biography.

blood on myself". However, the blood of a martyr does not come so cheaply. Almost a year is about to end when I am intending to keep to my word. Not only is the heart being attracted to each exciting phenomena, but rather it is spurring the pen as well.

I am still in this procrastination without any courage and the friends with their swift pace have reached their destination. I just received the news that the first part of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ* has been compiled, it is under print and is to be distributed soon. This whip will cause us to cover some distance by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*.

The themes of this article will concisely consist of: (1) Sharīʿah wa Ṯarīqah, (2) Education and Training, (3) Habits and Character, (4) Some angles related to writing and authoring. A few lines about his life without going into details of incidents. Those who need their thirst for details to be quenched must refer to the original biography.

Sharīʿah wa Ṯarīqah

I am neither a scholar of the Sharīʿah nor conversant with the Ṯarīqah. However, based on whatever little I understood from the company of these pious people, I am saying that if anyone wants to see a genuine and balanced combination of the Sharīʿah and Ṯarīqah in such a manner that no difference between the two can be perceived, then he will see it in Khānqāh Ashrafīyyah. Neither will the most hardened scholar of the Sharīʿah have an opportunity to point a finger nor the most erudite proponent of the Ṯarīqah. If on one hand there is complete preservation of "Allāh is the Greatest" through *as-Sunnah al-Jalīyyah fī al-Chishtīyyah al-ʿAlīyyah*,[1] then on the other hand the greatness of "Shaykh Akbar" is preserved in *at-Tanbīh aṯ-Ṯarabī fī Tanzīh Ibn al-ʿArabī*.[2]

I often think that if only the ʿulamā' – especially those who, out of good intentions, recoil from the Ṯarīqah or Tasawwuf – could come here [to Thānah Bhawan] with a genuine quest and an open mind, and experience for themselves. If the truth be told, Ḫaḏrat's outlook is especially in line with that of the ʿulamā'.

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[1] This book is a compilation of incidents demonstrating how the elders of the Chishtīyyah adhered to the Sharīʿah.
[2] This book is in defence of Ḫaḏrat Shaykh [Akbar Ibn ʿArabī].

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I have the treasure of īmān, however I feel I ought to be a bit disrespectful and say that very few ʿulamā' convey the sweetness of īmān and the true value of Allāh *taʿālā* (وَمَا قَدَرُو اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ). I feel that the essence of the Tarīqah is that the heart be filled with the sweetness of īmān and the true value of Allāh *taʿālā*, and be emptied of all besides Allāh *taʿālā*.

Education and training

When it comes to education and training, we can say that Allāh *taʿālā* created him for this purpose. It seems as if his entire life centred around it. At present he is so particular in this regard that even a seeker will find it difficult to do what Hadrat Wālā does for him. In fact, the seeker will not even think of the things which Hadrat Wālā thinks for him. He considers the most minute of things for the benefit and rectification of the seeker in the course of their correspondence with each other, sitting in each others company and in their mutual conversations. There is not even the prerequisite of a person being a murīd. In certain respects, I even recall Hadrat Wālā saying that he feels there is more freedom and leeway when there is no shaykh/murīd relationship.

People consider the shaykh/murīd relationship to be obligatory. Hadrat Wālā rectified this belief via the above statement. If a person has the insight, he will realize that consideration to rectification and training is given at every point of the way.

Most doctors concentrate on the illness in their treatment and not on the patient. Rarely are personal conditions or differences as regards time and place given consideration. Hadrat Wālā's spiritual treatment takes full consideration of both. For example, he has generally left out severe spiritual practices for the people of our times. He gives special consideration to the natural affinity of the person and his level of tolerance when prescribing different forms of dhikr and other spiritual practices. There is more emphasis on injunctions. Hadrat Wālā possesses extraordinary expertise in diagnosing the illness and identifying the nature of the self. A professional psychologist will not reach to the depths where Hadrat Wālā's gaze can reach. A person may regard a certain quality of his to be humility and someone else may also consider it to be

humility, but Hadrat Wālā's proficiency will diagnose it as pride. The patient then himself realizes that yes, it was pride and not humility. Sometimes a person will describe his condition in such a way that some other mentor would acknowledge it as wilāyāt, while Hadrat Wālā will instruct the person to seek treatment for dryness of the brains. On the other hand, based on certain conditions and thoughts, a person thinks that he has become an unbeliever or hypocrite. But in Hadrat Wālā's diagnosis it does not negate īmān and sincerity. Hadrat Wālā does not allow the most broken down person to lose courage. Instead, as long as his courage supports him, the ease in his Dīn lies in keeping the person attached to Allāh *taʿālā*. Experiences of this sort demonstrate to us the need for a mentor and what qualities he must have.

As regards education and training, Hadrat Wālā has certain principles which unravel countless knots of the spiritual path. For example, details and differences with regard to what is desired and what is not, what is within one's control and what is not. A seeker may consider many things to be more important and preferable whereas they are unimportant and unnecessary (e.g. certain spiritual conditions, expositions and supernatural feats). When these are not acquired, then in addition to the seeker's heart breaking, it does not develop any importance towards matters which are more important and which ought to be given preference. One great ease which Hadrat Wālā provided with regard to education and training and after which there can be no excuse of deprivation is that even if a person lives very far away, he can benefit considerably through correspondence. Hadrat Wālā's insight in this regard is a supernatural feat in itself. He places his finger on the pulse of the longest and most disturbing letters, and provides satisfying and convincing answers in a few paragraphs.

From my personal experience I can say that he gives a few lines' answer to two page letters without any confusion remaining. I now present the last one or two letters as examples.

The imām of the masjid in the area which I live is appointed and paid by the government. However, he is an "Imām Zuhrī" (he only performs the zuhr salāh). Even his punctuality for the zuhr salāh is for the benefit of the office workers or for "official government salāhs". He does not perform it during the

holidays. As for the remaining days and other salāh times, he neither adheres to the adhān nor the congregation. Anyone will enter the masjid and perform the salāh after calling out the adhān or without calling it out, with congregation or without congregation. Several congregations take place for a single salāh. What is the ruling for a second congregation in such a masjid? I posed this question to several senior scholars. Some of them responded by saying that if it has an appointed imām, it cannot be given the ruling of a cosmopolitan masjid merely because of negligence on the side of the imām or his disregard to his duty. Other scholars gave it the ruling of a cosmopolitan masjid. Some scholars resort to this fine distinction or intelligence by saying that the second congregation must be slightly away from where the first congregation was performed. My personal inclination was to avoid a second congregation.

Hadrat Wālā's totally satisfactory reply to this entire story was given in a single sentence which was against his personal inclination. He wrote: "The situation you described is an example of disorganization or an absence of organization."

Similarly I wrote to him with reference to certain matters by saying: "I intended giving it up on countless occasions but my intention broke on each occasion. I have now reached the point where I do not even feel like making an intention." He wrote back: "Even if you do not feel like it, you must do it. It never goes to waste. Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows when its effect will come to the fore." I can say with certainty that – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – a new life was given to my dead courage.

Habits and character

The most distinguishing qualities as regards Hadrat Wālā's habits and character are: informality, self-control and system. He neither approved of nor opted for something merely out of formality or for the sake of general practice and custom, which is burdensome to him, to others or is of no real benefit. Despite the discomfort that is caused by formality, people consider it to be "good character". Not only is Hadrat Wālā naturally averse to such "good character", in most cases it is not advantageous to the system of education and training. However, since people have generally become accustomed to formalities and pretences, and are desirous of them, some of Hadrat Wālā's social practices appear strange and become causes of misunderstanding. For example, people come to him in very

large numbers so he, by and large, did not take the responsibility of hospitality towards them. He did take on this responsibility in the beginning but those who know his ways and disposition are aware that when he takes on a responsibility – whether big or small – he carries it out to the full and with utmost importance. This inevitably affected his services in the field of spiritual instruction which is the fundamental purpose of people coming here in the first place. I recall Hadrat Wālā giving the same reason [on one occasion].

Similarly, I noticed people coming here – Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows under what assumptions - without informing Hadrat Wālā about their conditions and thoughts. Once they come here, they start posing questions to him with total disregard. Hadrat Wālā is naturally disturbed especially because he is intensely considerate about the feelings of others. In addition to this, if these people find that their assumptions were incorrect, then instead of deriving benefit from Hadrat Wālā, they will go back from where they came while having regrets over undertaking the journey and the difficulties which they had to endure in the course of it. Moreover, there are times when the work for which they undertook the journey could have been accomplished while sitting at home and merely corresponding with Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā takes all these points into consideration. This is why, contrary to his norm, the harsh questions which he poses in reply to the letters are initially terrifying to those who write the letters. However, those of them who remain firm and steadfast [in their correspondence despite the harshness] realize the value of the harshness later on.

As for providing genuine comfort and ease, concern for the wellness of others, assistance and consideration – the extent to which Hadrat Wālā worries about this cannot be reciprocated by others. This can be gauged from some of my small experiences. I went to Thānah Bhawan with my mother and a few family members on one occasion. The owner of the house which I wanted to rent near the Khānqāh sent a message that he wants one rupee as rent. Hadrat Wālā said: "No. Eight ānās." I said: "One rupee does not seem too much." He said: "There are many poor people who come here and will not be able to afford that much. Once the owner establishes a certain price, he will expect the same amount in future as well." Hadrat Wālā then asked me: "Did you go and check the house,

is it okay?” I replied: “Yes.” He then took me with and inspected the house himself. He paid particular attention to the toilet to which my mind had not even crossed. It was a tiny toilet. Hadrat Wālā said: “It will be difficult for the ladies to use this toilet.” Hadrat Wālā’s own sectioned off house became available within a few days so he asked me to stay there. It was extremely comfortable.

On another occasion the house in which I lived was at a distance from the Khānqāh. Hadrat Wālā used to send a special message to me first and then to those in the Khānqāh before the commencement of the morning assembly so that I am not delayed in arriving because of the distance. He used to add in his message to me: “I am informing you so that you may know that I am free at the moment. You can come to meet me if you want.”

On each of my visits to Thānah Bhawan I had the opportunity of being a guest of Hadrat Wālā. Sometimes he even accords me the honour of having a meal with him. However, if it is for more than one time, he does not go to this formality in most cases. This point may be disturbing to those who like formalities, and I too was unable to explain his reason for doing this. He himself explained it to me on one occasion. He said: “A guest cannot eat freely in the presence of his host.” Just imagine! If he is so considerate over these small matters, what wisdoms and underlying reasons he must be thinking of when dealing with important matters!

The same applies to his strict adherence to a time table. He generally has a time set aside for each task. Who can deny the innumerable benefits of this both for him and for others! The countless books and articles which he wrote, enabling the residents of the Khānqāh and other outsiders to attend two assemblies daily which last for about 4-5 hours, replying to all letters daily which average about 15-20 – all this is through the blessing of strict adherence to a time table and of a sound system. The time after maghrib is generally not a time to meet him. However, when I requested to speak to him in privacy, he gave me time after maghrib to speak to him for half an hour at a time and even more. He would remain seated [listening to me] for as long as I continued talking. I think on one occasion it even went to the time of ʿishā. The time to write taʿwīdh was between zuhr and ʿasr. However, on one occasion, my worker

needed a taʿwīdh so Hadrat Wālā very affectionately wrote it out for him after ʿishā without my having interceded on my worker's behalf.

Those who are always looking for customary formalities and pretentious mannerisms will certainly find it strange when they come to Hadrat Wālā. Due to their misunderstanding or lack of it, Allāh alone knows what they will assume his ways to be. However, the person who does not come here with any ulterior motive will certainly say without hesitation that all Hadrat Wālā's dealings and interactions are based on wisdom and common good. Instead of seeing "so-called" strictness, he will perceive intense comfort and ease.

Those who know me know how distant I am from sudden infatuation and obsession; and how maligned I am for my judgemental eye. However, I can see nothing but absolute and total affection and love in Hadrat Wālā. This is the view of one who looks on the surface and whose gaze is deficient. What a person endowed with perfect sight must be seeing can be learnt from none but one who is perfect.

Written works

It is strange that just as the sight of those who are accustomed to customs and formalities keeps them concealed from Hadrat Wālā's genuine affection and real kindness, his efforts in writing have deprived many from "leave out the word and move towards the meaning" as regards his written works and compositions. Superficiality is the universal plague of our times. People have become so enamoured by formalities, pretences and poetic language in the field of writing and are in search for them, that it is extremely difficult for them to read a book or article solely for the sake of knowledge and for the acquisition of meanings. I heard a religious and learned man saying with reference to Hadrat Wālā's books: "I wanted to read them but they are unreadable." I myself was caught up in this ailment for some time. My deceased father used to order most of Hadrat Wālā's books and would constantly instruct me to read them. But where will a person who is more interested in the clucking sound made by the tongue have any interest in life-saving food!

After having the opportunity of spending some time in Hadrat Wālā's service and gauging some of his knowledge and wisdom,

I can now say without exaggeration that the extent of knowledge, depth, inclination and effect which I received and still receive from Hadrat Wālā's writings, I do not get from anywhere else. I am astonished at how – despite so many written works – he uses so few words to convey so many meanings. Moreover, one will notice that in most cases, the correctness and comprehensiveness of the meaning which he wants to convey and the word or sentence which he conveys it in cannot be replaced by any other form of expression. If the truth be told, this is the fundamental excellence of a composition.

As for the actual subject matter and meaning, you can take any ordinary letter or the most voluminous of his books, rarely will you find a word which was used merely as an embellishment or to demonstrate his power of expression. Every word and every paragraph bears a certain meaning. If a person is inclined towards a subject matter and its meaning, he will find Hadrat Wālā's writing so magnetic and appealing that he will not feel like leaving out a single word. As for the comprehensiveness of his writings, his treasure of writings totally encompass every side and angle of knowledge of Dīn to the extent that the masses, the elite, the 'ulamā', the Sufis, the orators and propagators, the modernists and the ancients, the rationalists and the devotees – every type of people and every individual will find comfort in them. I have come across some people with basic education developing absolutely pure and correct understanding of Dīn solely by reading Hadrat Wālā's books to the extent that they surpass many senior scholars in this regard.

By "understanding of Dīn" I am not referring to monastic Dīn but non-monastic Dīn whose elixir turns one's worldly life into Dīn and empowers one with the good of this world before receiving the good of the Hereafter. I personally said to Hadrat Wālā on several occasions: "Let alone Dīnī matters, my heart desires to consult Hadrat Wālā on every minor and major issue of my worldly affairs." Although he is – due to his temperament and wisdoms – totally aloof from politics, if the general claimants to political expertise possessed the actual understanding of matters, the politics of Muslims today would have been beyond empty imitation.

One would assume that from his vast treasure of writings, Hadrat Wālā does not have anything for the modernists and Western educated people. But this is not the case. Instead, he paid special attention to this group in some of his writings such as *al-Intihibāt al-Mufīdah ʿan al-Ishtibāhāt al-Jadīdah*. In fact, I request the genuine seekers from this group to read Hadrat Wālā's books (especially the *Mawā'iz*) after consulting him. Allāh willing, not only will they be guided but will become genuine guides to others. Not only will their doubts and misgivings be removed, they will acquire a true taste of Dīn and the joy of īmān. It will be even more advantageous for them if they can avail themselves of spending some time in Hadrat Wālā's company.

The purpose of whatever I wrote above is certainly not to provide details on Hadrat Wālā's lofty excellences in the fields of knowledge and practice because my own understanding cannot fathom them. Rather, my purpose is merely to turn the reader's focus to a few obvious and outward points which – due to misunderstanding – become obstacles in the path of benefiting from Hadrat Wālā's lofty excellences. There is no worse deprivation in our times. The person who assumes water to be a mirage is worthy of far more pity, in fact pardon, than the one who assumes a mirage to be water.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the above article, *al-Fayd al-Jārī*, brings us to the end of the last chapter of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. I now present the lists which I had made reference to under the chapters on Hadrat Wālā's students, khulafā' and written works. These three lists will be presented in sequence. This will be followed by a conclusion which will – Allāh willing – bring us to the end of this book.

List of students

This is the list of students which I had made reference to in chapter nine of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. It contains the names, addresses and year of qualification of the students who completed under Hadrat Wālā in Kānpūr. The list was transcribed and drawn from the old documents of Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm, Kānpūr by Janāb Maulānā Hakīm ʿAbd al-Haq Khān Sāhib. I did not see the need to make inquiries about those who did not complete their studies during Hadrat Wālā's stay in Kānpūr. Similarly, I could not establish who completed their studies and who did not after Hadrat Wālā left Kānpūr

because he was not affiliated to any formal madrasah. It was neither possible nor necessary to ascertain the present addresses[1] and conditions of those who are listed below. This is why I did not go to any pains in this regard. Other necessary details with regard to the students can be found in the chapter on students.

	Name	**Address**	**Date**
1	Maulwī Fadl Haq	Allāhābād	17 Shaʿbān 1306
2	Maulwī Muhammad Husayn	Lucknow	20 Shaʿbān 1307
3	Maulwī Mazharul Haq	Chātgām	16 Shaʿbān 1308
4	Maulwī Muhammad Is-hāq	Bardwān	18 Shaʿbān 1309
5	Maulwī Sayyid Siddīq ar-Rahmān	Murshidābād	,,
6	Maulwī Sayyid ʿAbd al-Mannān	Murshidābād	13 Shaʿbān 1310
7	Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahīm	Māldah	,,
8	Maulwī Walī Ahmad	Rangoon, Burma	,,
9	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hakīm	Chātgām	,,
10	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq	Kamarlah	,,
11	Maulwī Ghulām Sultān	Chātgām	,,
12	Maulwī Sādiq al-Yaqīn	Bārah Bankī	,,
13	Maulwī Muhammad Hanīf	Bihar	,,
14	Maulwī ʿAzīz ar-Rahmān	Chātgām	,,
15	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq	Chātgām	,,
16	Maulwī Muhammad Ibrāhīm	Aʿzamgarh	,,
17	Maulwī Tamīz ad-Dīn	Chātgām	,,
18	Maulwī Muhammad Rashīd	Kānpūr	15 Shaʿbān 1311
19	Maulwī Ahmad ʿAlī	Bārah Bankī	,,
20	Maulwī ʿAzmat Ilāhī	Thānah Bhawan	,,

[1] The full address of the student is not provided. Only the town's name or district is given. (translator)

21	Maulwī Hakīm Sajjād Husayn	Hardoi	,,
22	Maulwī Anwār ʿAlī	Chātgām	,,
23	Maulwī Muhammad Ibrāhīm	Gangoh	,,
24	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hakīm	Chātgām	,,
25	Maulwī Muhammad Muqīm ad-Dīn	Arkān, Burma	,,
26	Maulwī Sayyid Is-hāq ʿAlī	Kānpūr	17 Shaʿbān 1313
27	Maulwī Muhammad Yūnus	Thānah Bhawan	,,
28	Maulwī Qādī ʿAbd as-Samad	Kānpūr	,,
29	Maulwī Muhammad Ilyās	Bijnor	,,
30	Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā	Bijnor	,,
31	Maulwī Saʿīd Ahmad	Itāwah	,,
32	Maulwī Zāhid Husayn	Giyā	,,
33	Maulwī Qādī ʿAbd al-Haq	Muzaffar Nagar	,,
34	Maulwī Sayyid ʿUbaydullāh	Chātgām	,,
35	Maulwī Jasīm ad-Dīn	Nadyah Bengal	,,
36	Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān	Aʿzamgarh	,,
37	Maulwī Muhammad Ismāʿīl	Balyā	,,
38	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hamīd	Arkān, Burma	,,
39	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Karīm	Chātgām	,,
40	Maulwī Yār Muhammad	Chātgām	,,
41	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Qādir	Chātgām	,,
42	Maulwī Nusrat ʿAlī	Chātgām	,,
43	Maulwī Shāh Lutf ar-Rasūl	Bārah Bankī	,,
44	Maulwī Muhammad ʿĀbid	Behrā’ich	,,
45	Maulwī Dalīl ar-	Chātgām	,,

	Rahmān		
46	Maulwī Fadl ar-Rahmān	Chātgām	,,
47	Maulwī Husām ad-Dīn	Allāhābād	17 Rajab 1315
48	Maulwī ʻAbd al-Majīd	Jīsar, Bengal	,,
49	Maulwī ʻAbd ar-Rahmān	Akyāb	,,
50	Maulwī Habībullāh	Chātgām	,,
51	Maulwī Hāfiz Nūr al-Hasan	Gangoh	,,
52	Maulwī Sultān Mahmūd	Itāwah	,,

List of khulafā’

This is the list which was referred to in chapter fifteen. It only has the names of the present khulafā’. Hadrat Wālā has two types of khulafā’, mujāzīn-e-bayʻat and mujāzīn-e-suhbat. This is why they are listed separately. Refer to the relevant chapter for a detailed explanation of the difference between the two. Briefly, the mujāzīn-e-bayʻat have permission to accept bayʻah and to teach and instruct their murīds. The mujāzīn-e-suhbat are only permitted to teach and instruct. The references for this are provided at the end of this list. By and large, the addresses[1] of these khulafā’ are in line with the sources and according to the time when permission was given to them. However, the addresses of some of them have changed. Those whose new addresses could be ascertained have been provided. The other addresses have been copied verbatim from their sources. The list of khulafā’ who have passed away has been transcribed from *Tatummāt Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* so that the reader may pray for their forgiveness and the elevation of their ranks. Details with regard to the khulafā’ must certainly be studied in the relevant chapter. That is all.

Mujāzīn-e-bay’at

1. Maulwī Muhammad ʻĪsā Sāhib, professor of Arabic, Allāhābād.

2. Maulwī ʻAbd al-ʻAlīm Sāhib, Bardawān.

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[1] The full addresses have not been given in this English translation. Only the city, town, village or district is given. (translator)

3. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib, principal of Raudatul ʿUlūm, Phulpūr, district Aʿzamgarh.

4. Hājī Sher Muhammad Sāhib, Sukkhur (Sindh).

5. Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib Bijnorī, Meerut.

6. Maulwī Afdal ʿAlī Sāhib, Bārah Bankī.

7. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, Gaurgānoh.

8. Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib, Assistant Inspector Madāris, Lucknow.

9. Maulwī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib, Khānqāh Imdādīyyah, Thānah Bhawan.

10. Maulwī Habībullāh Sāhib, Persian teacher at Government High School, Jālūn.

11. Maulwī Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah ʿAlīyyah, Dhaka.

12. Maulwī Wāhid Bakhsh Sāhib, Bhāwalpūr.

13. Hājī Shamshād Sāhib, Thānah Bhawan.

14. Muhammad ʿAbdullāh Khān Sāhib, Bhopal.

15. Sayyid Fakhr ad-Dīn Shāh Sāhib, Sukkhur (Sindh).

16. Maulwī Saghīr Muhammad Sāhib, Bengal.

17. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hamīd Sāhib, North Wazīrastān.

18. Maulwī At-har ʿAlī Sāhib, district Memon Singh.

19. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Sāhib, Chātgām.

20. Abul Barakāt Sāhib, Sultānpūr (for the masses only).

21. Maulwī Nadhīr Ahmad Sāhib, Karnāl.

22. Maulwī Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib, Allāhābād.

23. Maulwī ʿAbd as-Salām Sāhib, Peshawar.

24. Maulwī Muhammad Mūsā Sāhib, a teacher at Masjid-e-Nabawī, Bāb an-Nisā', Madīnah Munawwarah (Muhājir Madanī).

25. Maulwī Hasīn ad-Dīn Sāhib, Madras.

26. Maulwī Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib, Madras.

27. Maulwī Nadhīr Ahmad Sāhib, Muzaffar Nagar.

28. Maulwī Maqsūd ʿAlī Sāhib, Barīsāl.

29. Maulwī Wasīyyullāh Sāhib, Aʿzamgarh.

30. Maulwī Muhammad Hasan Sāhib, head teacher at Madrasah Nuʿmānīyyah, Amritsar.

31. Maulwī Sirāj Ahmad Khān Sāhib Amrohī, a teacher at Madrasah Imdād al-ʿUlūm, Thānah Bhawan.

32. Maulwī Mumtāz Ahmad Sāhib, Saundyāgiyā.

33. Munshī Haqdād Sāhib, Lucknow.

34. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Jabbār Sāhib, Fīrozpūr.

35. Maulwī Walī Ahmad Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah Qādirīyyah, Murādābād.

36. Maulwī Khayr Muhammad Sāhib, rector at Madrasah Fayd Muhammadī, Jālandhar.

37. Maulwī Ghulām Siddīq Sāhib, Ghāzī Khān.

38. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib Kāmilpūrī, teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

39. Maulwī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib, principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

40. Maulwī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib, a teacher at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

41. Maulwī Muhammad Nabīh Sāhib, Murādābād.

42. Maulwī Muhammad Sābir Sāhib, Gaurgānūh.

43. Nawāb Ahmad ʿAlī Khān Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

44. Hakīm Karam Husayn Sāhib, Sītāpūr (Audh).

45. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib, Allāhābād.

46. Muhammad ʿUthmān Khān Sāhib, Delhi.

47. Master Qabūl Ahmad Sāhib, assistant master at Government High School, Sītāpūr.

48. Maulwī Jalīl Ahmad Sāhib, ʿAlīgarh.

49. Maulwī Is-hāq ʿAlī Sāhib Kānpūrī, Allāhābād.

50. Shihāb ad-Dīn Sāhib, Meerut.

51. Maulwī Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib, Mathrā.

52. Maulwī Murtadā Hasan Sāhib, Bijnor.

53. Hakīm ʿAbd al-Khāliq Sāhib, Punjab.

54. Master Thāmin ʿAlī Sāhib, Government High School, Kānpūr.

55. Hāfiz ʿInāyat ʿAlī Sāhib, Ludhiyānā (for the masses only).

56. Maulwī Walī Muhammad Sāhib, a teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

57. Maulwī Nūr Bakhsh Sāhib, Chātgām.

58. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Wadūd Sāhib, Peshawar.

59. Maulwī Asʿadullāh Sāhib Rāmpūrī, a teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

60. Shaykh ʿAzīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib, Meerut.

61. Maulwī Hakīm Ilāhī Bakhsh Sāhib, Sukkhur, Sindh.

62. Master Muhammad Sharīf Sāhib, a teacher at District Board Model School, Punjab.

63. Master Sher Muhammad Sāhib, a teacher at District Board Model School, Punjab.

64. Hāfiz Walī Muhammad Sāhib, Farkhābād.

65. Maulwī Kifāyatullāh Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah Saʿīdīyyah, Shāhjahānpūr.

66. Maulwī Hāmid Hasan Sāhib, Murādābād.

67. Hakīm Fadlullāh Sāhib, Shikārpūr, Sindh.

68. Bābū ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

69. Maulwī Rasūl Khān Sāhib, a teacher at Oriental College, Lahore.

70. Maulwī Muhammadullāh Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah Ashraf al-ʿUlūm, Dhāka.

71. Hakīm Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq Khān Sāhib, Fatahpūr.

72. Hakīm Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

73. Mahmūd al-Ghanī Sāhib Sahāranpūrī, Hyderabad, Deccan.

74. Munshī ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib, previously a lawyer and now a homoeopathic doctor, Jaunpūr.

Mujāzīn-e-Suhbat

1. Saʿīd Ahmad Khān Sāhib, Balrām, Aytah.

2. Hāfiz ʿAlī Nazar Baig Sāhib, Murādābād.

3. Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Sāhib, Lucknow.

4. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib, Patna.

5. Maulwī Mahmūd al-Haq Sāhib, Hardoi.

6. Munshī ʿAbd al-Walī Sāhib, Bahrāʾich Audh.

7. Shaykh Muhammad ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib, session judge, Karachi.

8. Muhammad Jalīl Sāhib, Dehradun.

9. Maulwī Anwār al-Hasan Sāhib, honorary magistrate, Lucknow.

10. Munshī ʿAlī Shākir Sāhib, Lakhīmpūr.

11. Muhammad Najm Ahsan Sāhib, Partābgarh.

12. Maulwī Manfaʿat ʿAlī Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

13. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hakīm Sāhib, a professor at Memon Singh College, Bengal.

14. Munshī ʿAlī Sajjād Sāhib, deputy collector, Jaunpūr.

15. Mazhar Ahmad Sāhib, Bhopal.

16. Hāfiz Muhammad Tāhā Sāhib, Gorukhpūr.

17. Khwājah Muhammad Sādiq, Amritsar.

18. Munshī ʿAbd as-Sabūr Sāhib, Shāhjahānpūr.

19. Hāfiz Zāhid Hasan Sāhib Amrohī, Rānīkhet.

20. Bakhshish Ahmad Sāhib, Gorukhpūr.

21. Hāfiz Liqāʾullāh Sāhib Pānīpattī, Hyderabad, Deccan.

22. Maulwī Zuhūr al-Hasan Sāhib, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

23. Maulwī Muhammad Tāhir ibn Maulānā Hāfiz Ahmad Sāhib, Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

24. Maulwi Ishfāq ar-Rahmān Sāhib Kāndhlawī, a teacher at Fatahpūrī Delhi.

25. Maulwī Sultān Mahmūd Sāhib, head teacher at Fatahpūrī Delhi.

26. Hāfiz Muhammad Ismāʿīl Sāhib, Delhi.

27. Munshī Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib, Rehtak.

28. Maulwī ʿAbd as-Samad Sāhib Banārsī, Kānpūr.

29. Maulwī Abul Fidā' Nūr Muhammad Sāhib, Hyderabad, Deccan.

30. Hājī Dāwūd Hāshim Sāhib, Rangoon.

31. Maulwī Hamīd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī, a teacher at Miftāh al-ʿUlūm, Jalālābād, Muzaffar Nagar.

32. Maulwī Riyād al-Hasan Sāhib, Meerut.

33. Hakīm Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib Gangohī, Bombay.

34. Munshī ʿAbd al-Hamīd Sāhib, Lucknow.

35. ʿAbd al-Ghafūr Sāhib, Jaudpūr.

36. Hakīm Fayyād ʿAlī Sāhib, Bhopal.

37. Qādī Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib, Benares.

Note: The above two lists have been taken from *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat.* However, a few additions and subtractions have been made to these lists from the written announcement which I received just recently from Hadrat Wālā. It is quoted here for the reader's information.

As per the article published in *an-Nūr* dated Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1354 A.H., Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib, a teacher at Bareilly, who is included in the list of Mujāzīn-e-Bayʿat passed away on 21 Shawwāl 1354 A.H. This results in one less in the first list. Incidentally, Munshī ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib has been promoted from Mujāz-e-Suhbat to Mujāz-e-Bayʿat. In this way, the number of Mujāzīn-e-Bayʿat remains the same. Also incidentally, Hakīm Fayyād ʿAlī has been admitted into the list of Mujāzīn-e-Suhbat, so the number in this list also remains the same. One person has been removed from the list of Mujāzīn-e-Suhbat due to some doubts about his condition. However, Qādī Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib, a pensions deputy collector in Benares has been included into this list. In this

way, the number of Mujāzīn-e-Suhbat still remains the same. The announcement ends here.

List of khulafā' who passed away

1. Maulwī Ahmad ʿAlī Sāhib – in-charge of writing *Bahishtī Zewar.*

2. Maulwī Muhammad Sāhib Chātgāmī.

3. Maulwī Nūr Husayn Sāhib, district Jhelam.

4. Maulwī ʿUbayd al-Haq, Mauhanpūrī.

5. Hakīm Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib Bijnorī.

6. Hakīm Nūr Ahmad Sāhib Kānpūrī.

7. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān, Bikehrā (15 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1340 A.H.).

8. Maulwī Khalīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Aʿzamgarhī (Rajab 1341 A.H).

9. Munshī Muhammad Sultān Sāhib Madrāsī (Shawwāl 1342 A.H.).

10. Hājī Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib Khaurjauwī (8 Dhū al-Hijjah 1343 A H.).

11. Maulwī Muhammad ʿĪsā Sāhib, Benares (9 Rajab 1344 A.H.).

12. Maulwī Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib Fatahpūrī, Bārābankī (beginning of Shaʿbān 1344 A.H.).

13. Hāfiz Muhammad ʿUmar Nahtaurī, ʿAlīgarh (7 Ramadān 1344 A.H.).

14. Shaykh Maʿshūq ʿAlī Sāhib Qanūjī (Shawwāl 1345 A.H).

15. Maulwī Muhammad Sādiq Sāhib, Māligāon, district Nāsik (13 Dhū al-Hijjah 1347 A.H.).

16. Sufi Rahīm Bakhsh Sāhib, Delhi (Dhū al-Hijjah 1347 A.H.).

17. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib Sahāranpūrī, Hyderabad (27 Ramadān 1348 A.H.).

18. Khayrāt Ahmād Khān Sāhib, Saundhyā, district Giyā (26 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1349 A.H.).

19. Maulwī Abul Hasan Sāhib Jaunpūrī (7 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1350 A.H.).

20. Hājī Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib, Rangoon (8 Muharram 1352 A.H.).

21. Maulwī Abū Bakr Sāhib Arkānī (22 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1352 A.H.).

22. Sayyid Fīroz Shāh Sāhib, Peshawar (3 Shawwāl 1353 A.H.).

23. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib Shāhjahānpūrī (4 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1354 A.H.).

24. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib Barelwī (21 Shawwāl 1354 A.H.).

Written works

The following is a list which we had made reference to in a previous chapter titled Writing and Composing. Like the previous lists of the khulafā', the present list is quoted from the addendums to *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat*. However, a few new written works have been added from the written announcement which I recently received from Hadrat Wālā. The list of written works is followed by a list of works done by other scholars on Hadrat Wālā's writings. This too has been quoted from the addendums to *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat* from the text of Hadrat Wālā.

Books

1. Jazā' al-Aʿmāl.
2. Karāmāt Imdādīyyah.
3. Kamālāt Imdādīyyah.
4. Safā'ī Muʿāmalāt.
5. Islāh ar-Rusūm with its addendum.
6. Maktūb Mahbūb al-Qulūb.
7. Taʿlīm ad-Dīn.
8. Aʿmāl Qur'ānī.
9. Khawās Furqānī.
10. Āthār Tibyānī.
11. Aurād Rahmānī.
12. ʿIlājā al-Qaht wa al-Wabā'.
13. Hifz al-Īmān.
14. Islāh Tarjumah Dehlawīyyah.
15. Islāh Tarjumah Hayrat.
16. Islāh al-Khiyāl.

17. Huqūq al-Islām.
18. Rūnamā'e Mathnawī Manzūm (in rhymed verses).
19. Shauq-e-Watan.
20. Akhbār Baynī.
21. al-Istibsār fī Fadl al-Istighfār.
22. Akhbār Zalzalah.
23. al-Qaul as-Sawāb fī Mas'alatil Hijāb.
24. Taswīr al-Muqattaʿāt li Taysīr Baʿd al-ʿIbārāt (Arabic).
25. Qasd as-Sabīl ilā al-Maulā al-Jalīl.
26. al-Qaul al-Badīʿ fī Ishtirāt al-Misr li at-Tajmīʿ.
27. Zer wa Bumm Mathnawī (Persian).
28. Talkhīs al-Mirqāt.
29. Talkhīs ash-Sharīfiyyah (Arabic).
30. Tas-hīl al-Maʿānī (Arabic).
31. Talkhīs al-Manār (Arabic).
32. al-Madār (Arabic).
33. Dirāyah al-ʿIsmah (Arabic).
34. Talkhīs Hidāyat al-Hikmah (Arabic).
35. Talkhīs al-Bidāyah (Arabic).
36. ath-Thalāthīn bi Shakl Jadwal (Arabic).[1]
37. Tadh'īl Sharh al-Aqā'id (Arabic).
38. ʿAsharah Tarūs (Arabic).[2]
39. Sabʿa Sayyārah (Arabic).[3]
40. Tajwīd al-Qur'ān Manzūm.
41. Yādgār Haq al-Qur'ān.[4]
42. Iksīr fī Ithbāt at-Taqdīr.
43. Anwār al-Wujūd fī Atwār ash-Shuhūd (Arabic).
44. at-Tajallī al-ʿAzīm fī Ahsanī Taqwīm (Arabic).[5]

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[1] Book number 36 is a condensed version of *Arbaʿīn* of Ghazzālī. It is written in a tabular form. It contains indications as regards where the texts have been left out. If anyone wishes to publish it separately, he may do it by the help of these indications. The sermon is also written at the beginning.

[2] A collection of books numbered 28-38 is popularly known as *Talkhīsāt ʿAshar.*

[3] It contains the chains of transmission of Hadīth collections. The beginning sections of some of the transmissions need to be reinvestigated.

[4] This is a condensed version of *Tajwīd al-Qur'ān* with a few additions.

[5] This book is a part of *Anwār al-Wujūd.*

45. al-Khutab al-Ma'thūrah min al-Āthār al-Mash-hūrah (Arabic).
46. Hifz al-Arbaʿīn maʿa Tarjumah wa Sharh Durūrī (Arabic and 40 Hadīth).
47. Furūʿ al-Īmān.
48. Sabq al-Ghāyāt fī Nusk al-Āyāt (Arabic).
49. Tahqīq Taʿlīm Angrezī.
50. Maktūbāt Imdādīyyah maʿa Sudd Fawā'id.
51. Haq as-Simāʿ.
52. Yād Yārān.
53. Kalīd Mathnawī – daftar awwal.
54. Qurubāt ʿIndallāh wa Salawātur Rasūl (Arabic).[1]
55. Tatummah Qurubāt ʿIndallāh wa Salawātur Rasūl (Arabic).
56. Tanshīt at-Tabʿ fī Ijrā' as-Sabʿ.
57. al-Khitāb al-Malīh fī Tahqīq al-Mahdī wa al-Masīh.
58. at-Ta'dīm Liman Laysa lahū fī al-ʿIlm wa al-Adab Nasīb.[2]
59. Zād as-Saʿīd fī as-Salāt ʿalā an-Nabī al-Wahīd.
60. Nayl ash-Shifā' bi Naʿl al-Mustafā.[3]
61. al-Qaul al-Fāsil Bayna al-Haq wa al-Bātil.[4]
62. Yādgār Pur Anwār Khwājah Sāhib Ajmerī.[5]
63. Tahdhīr al-Ikhwān ʿan ar-Ribā fī al-Hindustān.
64. at-Tuqā fī Ahkām ar-Ruqā.
65. Kashf al-Ghashwah ʿan Wajh ar-Rishwah.
66. at-Taurīʿ fī Fasād at-Tauzīʿ.
67. al-Haq as-Sirāh fī Tahqīq Ujrah an-Nikāh.[6]
68. Fayslah Haft Mas'alah.[7]

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[1] Its translation is *Munājāt Maqbūl.*

[2] This book was published in the name of a student. He may have added a few poetic themes here and there. This book cannot be found and, anyway, it is not an essential book.

[3] This book is published with *Zād as-Saʿīd*. Certain essential notes with regard to this book have been printed in *an-Nūr*, issue no. 9, vol. 3, Muharram 1342 A.H.

[4] This book is printed with *Tuhfatul Mu'minīn* which is written by another author.

[5] This book contains a short history of Khwājah Sāhib and has been printed with *Ru'edād Madrasah Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm Kānpūr*. A spiritual practice has been added towards the end by one of the attendants of the madrasah [in Kānpūr]. One should not act on it.

[6] Books numbered 63-67 have been published together.

[7] Written under the instruction of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu.* Some of its texts are allegedly unsubstantiated. Details in this regard

69. at-Tartīb al-Laṯīf fī Qiṣṣah al-Kalīm wa al-Ḥanīf.
70. Ta'līm aṯ-Ṯālib.[1]
71. Bahishtī Zewar.[2]
72. Khātimah bi al-Khayr.
73. al-Iqtiṣād fī at-Taqlīd wa al-Ijtihād.
74. Ḥikāyāt Mau'iẕat.[3]
75. Mu'akhkhar aẕ-Ẕunūn 'an Muqaddamah Ibn Khaldūn.[4]
76. Naṣīḥat Nāmah bi Jawāb Waṣīyyat Nāmah.[5]
77. Raf' al-Khilāf fī Ḥukm al-Auqāf.[6]
78. (Tafsīr) Bayān al-Qur'ān (12 volumes).
79. Imdād al-Fatāwā (4 volumes).
80. Khiṯāb an-Nadwah.[7]
81. 'Irfān Ḥāfiẕ.
82. al-Futūḥ fī Aḥkām ar-Rūḥ.
83. Mulakhkhaṣ al-Anwār wa at-Tajallī (Arabic).[8]
84. Masā'il al-Mathnawī.[9]
85. Ḥaqīqah aṯ-Ṯarīqah 'an as-Sunnah al-Anīqah.

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can be learnt from an article of Ḥaḏrat Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* which is included in *Tanbīhāt Waṣīyyat* and with which I agree to the letter.

[1] Selections from *Ta'līm ad-Dīn* written by myself.

[2] The entire section on Tajwīd and the book from the beginning to the section on Tajwīd was written by Maulwī Aḥmad 'Alī Ṣāḥib Marḥūm. I was with him throughout in the preparation of this book. As for *Bahishtī Gauhar* which is the eleventh part of *Bahishtī Zewar,* I condensed it from *'Ilm al-Fiqh* which was written by Maulwī 'Abd ash-Shakūr Ṣāḥib Kākaurwī.

[3] This book has been printed with *Chashmah Raḥmat* which is written by Muḥammad Islām Ṣāḥib. However, a story about Bahlūl *raḥimahullāh* which is unverified has been added by someone without my permission.

[4] This book has been printed as a part of *Fatāwā Ashrafīyyah.* Later on. *Fatāwā Ashrafīyyah* was itself divided into chapters and made a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā.*

[5] This is a refutation of an announcement made by a fabricator who most of the time published his announcements as a servant of Madīnah Munawwarah. This book was published in the name of Maulānā Ṣādiq al-Yaqīn Ṣāḥib.

[6] This book was published together with *Ithbāt Waqf Lāzim* of Qārī Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣāḥib Jalālābādī.

[7] This book has been printed as a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā.*

[8] This book is a condensed version of the books *Anwār al-Wujūd* and *at-Tajallī al-'Aẕīm.*

[9] This book is taken from the first register of *Kalīd Mathnawī.*

86. an-Nukat ad-Daqīqah.
87. Ta’yīd al-Haqīqah bi al-Āyāt al-ʿAtīqah (Arabic).[1]
88. Nashr at-Tīb fī Dhikr an-Nabī al-Habīb.
89. Wujūh al-Mathānī maʿa Taujīh al-Kalimāt wa al-Maʿānī (Arabic).
90. al-Intibāhāt al-Mufīdah ʿan al-Ishtibāhāt al-Jadīdah.
91. Jāmiʿ al-Āthār maʿa Tābiʿ al-Āthār (Arabic).
92. Ziyādāt ʿalā Kutub ar-Riwāyāt maʿa Dhanābāt li mā fī az-Ziyādāt (Arabic).
93. Bast al-Banān wa Kaff al-Lisān ʿan Kātib Hifz al-Īmān.
94. Taʿdil at-Taqwīm.[2]
95. Mi’ah Durūs (Arabic).
96. Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat.
97. Islāh an-Nisā’ (addendum to part six of Bahishtī Zewar).
98. Islāh Inqilāb (two parts).
99. Huqūq al-ʿIlm.
100. Ādāb al-Muʿāsharat.
101. Aghlāt al-ʿAwām.
102. Kalīd Mathnawī (sixth register).
103. at-Tarā’if wa az-Zarā’if.[3]
104. Tarbīyyat as-Sālik wa Tanjīyyat al-Hālik (in several parts).
105. Hawādith al-Fatāwā (in several parts).
106. Hidāyah al-Ummah wa Duʿāt al-Millah.
107. Tatummāt Imdād al-Fatāwā.[4]
108. al-Ibtilā’ li Ahl al-Istifā’.[5]
109. Malfūzāt Khibrat (in several parts).
110. Shadharāt al-Hikam.[6]
111. Jamāl al-Qur’ān.
112. Maktūbāt Khibrat (in several parts).

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[1] This book with its translation has been published by Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib. Note: Books numbered 81-87 are parts of *at-Takashshuf fī Muhimmāt at-Tasawwuf*. This collection together with a few other parts are published as *at-Takashshuf*.
[2] This book is printed with a time-table [of salāh times].
[3] This is a collection of various miscellaneous themes which were being collated from time to time.
[4] These are addendums to the four volumes of *Imdād al-Fatāwā* and a few other booklets which were published in *al-Imdād* and *an-Nūr*.
[5] This has been printed with the first volume of *Tarbīyyat as-Sālik.*
[6] This book was published for a short period of time in *ar-Rashīd* or *al-Qāsim.*

113. Tarjīh ar-Rājih (in several parts).
114. Husn al-ʿIlāj li Sū’ al-Mizāj.[1]
115. Malfūzāt Husn al-ʿAzīz (in several parts).
116. Maktūbāt Husn al-ʿAzīz (in several parts).
117. Maqālāt Hikmat.
118. Mujādalāt Muʿdilat.[2]
119. Hukm al-Hakīm.[3]
120. Zakāt al-Fard fī Nabāt al-Ard.[4]
121. Ardā al-Aqwāl fī ʿArd al-Aʿmāl.
122. Maʿārif al-ʿAwārif, tarjumah ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif maʿa Maghārif al-Maʿārif Hāshiyah Maʿārif.[5]
123. al-Masālih al-ʿAqlīyyah li al-Ahkām an-Naqlīyyah (three volumes).
124. Namūdhaj min Muʿtaqadāt Baʿd Ahl al-ʿIwaj (Persian).
125. Risālah Bast Masā’il.[6]
126. Taʿdīl Huqūq al-Wālidayn.[7]
127. Taqrīr Baʿd an-Nabāt fī Tafsīr Baʿd al-Āyāt (this book is presently with the calligrapher).
128. Lubb al-Mathnawī.
129. Zawāl as-Sunnah.
130. Tashnīf al-Asmāʿ.
131. Lauh al-Alwāh.[8]
132. Nus-h al-Ikhwān fī Surūf az-Zamān.
133. al-Miftāh al-Maʿnawī.[9]
134. Khayr al-Hudūr fī as-Safar ilā Kānpūr.
135. Khayr al-ʿUbūr fī Safar Gorukhpūr.

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[1] Selections from *Tarbīyyat as-Sālik*.
[2] These two (books 117 and 118) are the titles of the malfūzāt which are attached to several parts of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat*.
[3] This is a part of *Husn al-ʿAzīz* which was published separately as a sample.
[4] This book is printed as a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*.
[5] Both volumes were periodically printed in *al-Qāsim* and *ar-Rashīd*, and then in *al-Imdād*. They were not completed.
[6] These two (books 124 and 125) form parts of the first addendum to *Imdād al-Fatāwā*.
[7] This book is the second addendum to *Imdād al-Fatāwā*.
[8] These two (books 130 and 131) have been printed in Chār Bāgh Tarab.
[9] This book has been published with *Maktūbāt Khibrat*.

136. Khayr al-Hudūr fī as-Safar ath-Thālith ilā Gorukhpūr.
137. Adab al-Aʿlām, Mulaqqab al-Kanz an-Nāmī.
138. Adab al-Iʿtidāl.
139. Adab at-Tarīq, Mulaqqab Adab ar-Rafīq.
140. Adab at-Tark.
141. Adab al-ʿAshīr.
142. Adab al-Islām.
143. Jalwah-e-Yūsuf.[1]
144. Masāʾil as-Sulūk min Kalām Malik al-Mulūk (Arabic).
145. Rafʿ ash-Shukūk, tarjumah Masāʾil as-Sulūk.
146. Irshād al-Hāʾim fī Huqūq al-Bahāʾim.
147. Islāh al-Mizāj bi Aslah al-ʿIlāj.[2]
148. Sidq ar-Ruʾyah.
149. ar-Raqq al-Manshūr.
150. Qāʾid Qādiyān.
151. Kiswatun Niswah.
152. Hikāyāt ash-Shikāyāt, with two addendums.
153. Sajjādah Nashīnī.
154. al-Insidād li Fitnah al-Irtidād.
155. Musāʾalah Ahl al-Khullāh fī Masʾalah az-Zullah.[3]
156. Anwār al-Muhsinīn.
157. ʿImārah al-ʿĀlam bi Imāʾāt Ādam.
158. Bulūgh al-Ghāyah fī Tahqīq Khātam al-Wilāyah.
159. Hifz al-Hudūd li Huqūq al-Judūd.
160. an-Naʿīm fī al-Jahīm.
161. Rafʿ az-Zahmah ʿan Maʿnā Wusʿ ar-Rahmah.
162. al-Kalimah at-Tāmmah fī an-Nubūwwah al-ʿĀmmah.
163. Tadwīr al-Falak fī Tat-hīr al-Malak.
164. al-Qaul al-Anfaʿ fī Tahqīq Imkān al-Abdaʿ.
165. Niʿmal ʿAun fī Tahqīq Taubati Firʿaun.
166. Dhikr Mahmūd.
167. Taysīr al-Mantiq, Hawāshī Taysīr al-Mantiq.
168. Ahqar ke Maslak kī Sharh.
169. as-Suhuf al-Manshūrah.
170. ash-Shukr wa ad-Duʿāʾ.

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[1] Books 134-143 have been published with *Husn al-ʿAzīz.*
[2] This book is a part of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik.*
[3] This book is included in *Imdād al-Fatāwā.*

171. ar-Raudah an-Nādirah.[1]
172. at-Tasharruf bi Maʿrifah Ahādīth at-Tasawwuf.
173. Takmīl at-Tasarruf Tas-hīl at-Tasharruf.[2]
174. Mawā'id al-ʿAwā'id fī Zawā'id al-Fā'id.[3]
175. Taghyīr al-ʿUnwān fī Baʿd ʿIbārāt Hifz al-Īmān.
176. Mutashabbihāt al-Qur'ān at-Tarāwīh Ramadān.
177. al-Qaul Jāmiʿ Dehli.
178. Dukhūl wa Khurūj barr Nuzūl wa ʿUrūj.
179. al-Qaul al-Ahkam fī Tahqīq Iltizām Mā Lam Yalzam.
180. Gharā'il ar-Raghā'ib.
181. Chār Jū-e-Behesht.
182. Diyā' al-Afhām min ʿUlūm Baʿd al-Aʿlām.[4]
183. al-Khutūb al-Mudhībah.[5]
184. Dhamm al-ʿAlā'iq maʿa al-Khalā'iq.
185. ar-Rafīq.[6]
186. Majālis al-Hikmat.[7]
187. al-Haq.[8]
188. Shamm at-Tīb.[9]
189. Kalīd Mathnawī, second register.
190. Kalīd Mathnawī, third register.
191. Kalīd Mathnawī, fourth register.
192. Kalīd Mathnawī, fifth register.[10]
193. Itfā' al-Fitan, tarjumah Ihyā' as-Sunan.
194. Irshād ar-Rashīd (malfūzāt).
195. Riyād al-Fawā'id (maktūbāt).

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[1] This book has not been printed.
[2] This is a translation of *at-Tasharruf.*
[3] This book is still being written.
[4] A collection of correspondence between myself [Hadrat Wālā] and Hadrat Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* on certain contentious issues which have been printed in *Mukātabāt Rashīdīyyah.* I gave it this title so that if it is printed as a part [of another book] or separately, it must be given this title. Subsequently it has been published with this title in the book *Thalj as-Sudūr.*
[5] This book has been made a part of *Islāh Inqilāb.*
[6] This has been selected from the *Mawā'iz* and published in *al-Imdād.*
[7] It contains malfūzāt with additions from *Jāmiʿ.*
[8] This book contains rational themes which were selected from the *Mawā'iz* and published in *ar-Rashād*, volume two.
[9] This book is published as a part of *Nashr at-Tīb.*
[10] The commentary of these four registers are printed in *Shabbīrī* with my explanations in simple language.

196. al-Mahfūz al-Kabīr.[1]
197. ath-Thawāb al-Hulī, Tatimmah al-Maslak adh-Dhakī (Arabic).
198. Zil Suffah.[2]
199. Amwāj Talab.[3]
200. Safar Nāmah Quetta.
201. Tābiʿ al-Āthār (as mentioned with book number 91).
202. Dhanābāt (as mentioned with book number 92).
203. an-Nashr li al-ʿAshr (it is a part of *Tarjīh*).
204. Sharīf ad-Dirāyāt.
205. Rafʿ an-Naba'.
206. Suwād Khūbī.
207. Khutūt Khūbī.
208. Ahsan al-Athāth (it is a part of *Mawā'id*).
209. Imdād al-Mushtāq.
210. al-Latā'if li at-Tā'if.
211. Khayr ad-Dalālah (it is a part of *Mawā'id*).
212. al-Qaul al-Fasl (it is a part of *Tarbīyyat*).
213. al-Qaul as-Sahīh (it is a part of *Mawā'id*).
214. Irsāl al-Junūd.
215. Tabsīr az-Zujāj.
216. Ahsan at-Tafhīm (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
217. Iskāt al-Munkir.
218. al-Matn al-Imdādī.
219. al-Kalim ad-Dāllah.
220. Rāfʿ ad-Dank.
221. al-ʿUdhr wa an-Nadhr.
222. al-Mawāhib.[4]
223. al-Jalā' wa ash-Shauf fī Ahkām ar-Rajā' wa al-Khauf (it is a part of *Tarbīyyat*).
224. as-Salsabīl li ʿĀbirī as-Sabīl (it is a part of *Husn al-ʿAzīz*).
225. Taqtīf ath-Thamarāt fī Takhfīf ath-Thamarāt (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
226. Ahkām at-Tajallī min at-Taʿallī wa at-Tadallī.

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[1] This book is published as a part of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*.
[2] Addendum to *Tanbīhāt Wasīyyat*. Maulwī ʿAbdullāh Sāhib had made additions to it, so it has been published in his name.
[3] This book is published in *Chār Bāgh Tarab*.
[4] This book was published as a series in *Akhbār al-ʿAdl* and was subsequently stopped.

227. Tatimmah Nihāyah al-Idrak fī Aqsām al-Ishrāk.
228. Bayān al-Wufūd fī Aʿwān Ibn Saʿūd (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
229. Akhbār Ahl al-Majd ʿan Āthār Ahl an-Najd.[1]
230. at-Tanbīh at-Tarabī fī Tanzīh Ibn al-ʿArabī *rahimahullāh*.
231. Iqāmah at-Tāmah ʿalā Zāʿim Dāmah an-Nubūwwah al-Haqīqīyyah al-ʿĀmmah.
232. Tafsīl al-Kalām fī Hukm Taqbīl al-Aqdām (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
233. Mauqiʿ al-Hisān min Ishāʿāt al-Islām (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
234. al-Istihdār li al-Ihtidār.
235. ʿUlūw an-Nāzil.
236. Sirāj az-Zayt ilā Minhāj al-Bayt.
237. al-Idrāk wa at-Tawassul ilā Haqīqah al-Ishrāk wa at-Tawassul.
238. al-Yamm fī as-Samm.[2]
239. al-Qasr al-Mushayyad li al-ʿAsr al-Jadīd.
240. Qand Deoband.
241. Talāyun al-ʿArā'ik fī Tahjīn Strike (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
242. Islāh al-Maʿtūh fī Taʿrīf al-Harām wa al-Makrūh.
243. Hayāt al-Muslimīn.
244. Khwān Khalīl.
245. Tahsīn Dār al-ʿUlūm min Taskhīn Nār as-Samūm (it is a part of *at-Tarā'if* volume two).
246. Tahsīn Dār al-ʿUlūm bi Tazyīn Anwār an-Nujūm.[3]
247. al-Maʿlūmāt al-Irshādīyyah ʿalā al-Marqūmāt al-Imdādīyyah.
248. Da'b al-Masājid ʿalā Ādāb al-Masājid (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
249. at-Tahqīq al-Farīd fī Hukm Ālah Taqrīb as-Saut al-Baʿīd (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
250. Thabāt as-Sutūr li Dhawāt al-Hudhūr (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).

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[1] These two books (228 and 229) are on the subject of the Najdīs.
[2] This book and at-Tamm fī as-Samm (number 271) are the shortest books in this list.
[3] It is an addendum to the previous book published in *al-Qāsim*, Muharram 1347 A.H.

251. Ilqā’ as-Sakīnah fī Hukm Ibdā’ az-Zīnah (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
252. Ahkām al-Ītilāf (it is a part of *an-Nūr*).
253. Zuhūr al-ʿAdam bi Nūr al-Qadam.
254. Nadīrī bi Sharh Kalām Nazīrī.
255. al-Kalim at-Tayyib.
256. at-Taqsīr fī at-Tafsīr.
257. Jazl al-Kalām fī ʿAzl al-Imām.
258. Mazīd al-Majīd.
259. Bāb ar-Rayyān.
260. Bayt ad-Dayyān.
261. ʿAysh al-Hayyān.[1]
262. Mahfūzāt, Mulaqqab Ashraf at-Tanbīh.
263. Malhūzāt.
264. Mahfūzāt.[2]
265. Maqālāt Hasanah, Mulaqqab Lamʿān ad-Dīn.
266. Lāmiʿ ʿAlāmāt al-Auliyā’, i.e. Talkhīs Jāmiʿ Karāmāt al-Auliyā’.
267. Muʿāmalah al-Muslimīn fī Mujādalah Ghayr al-Muslimīn.
268. Shahādah al-Aqwām bi Sidq al-Islam.[3]
269. Khutubāt al-Ahkām.
270. an-Nukhab fī al-Khutab.
271. at-Tamm fī as-Samm.
272. Damm Shārid al-Ibil.
273. Malfūz Ādāb al-Akhbār.[4]
274. Siyānah al-Muslimīn.
275. as-Sāʿāt li at-Tāʿāt.
276. Jamʿ as-Sukūk fī Qamʿ ash-Shukūk.
277. Afkār Dīnī, addendum to Akhbār Baynī.
278. Zuhūr al-Qur’ān min Sudūr as-Sibyān.
279. al-Qatā’if min al-Latā’if.
280. al-Qaul al-Jalīl.

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[1] These last three books (259-261) are parts of Hayāt al-Muslimīn. They have been given this special title for a special reason.

[2] These last three books (262-264) comprise the new edition of *Malfūzāt.*

[3] Refer to *an-Nūr*, Dhū al-Hijjah 1348 A.H.

[4] With the words of Maulwī Muhammad Shafīʿ of Deoband. It was published in *al-Qāsim* of Shaʿbān and Ramadān 1348 A.H. and also separately with the title *Islāmī Akhbārau ke Liye Sharʿī Dastūr al-ʿAmal.* It was also published as a part of *at-Tarā’if* volume two.

281. Isʿād al-Asʿad.
282. Jalā’il al-Abnā’ fī Hurmah Halā’il al-Anbā’.
283. at-Tahrīd ʿalā Sālih at-Taʿrīd (it is a part of *at-Tasharruf* volume three).
284. Kathrat al-Adhwāj li Sāhib al-Miʿrāj.
285. Siqāyāt as-Sayyib Hāshiyah Riwāyāt at-Tayyib.
286. Wasl as-Sabab fī Fasl as-Sanab.
287. al-Hādī li al-Hayrān Wādī Tafsīl al-Bayān (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
288. Tas-hīh al-ʿIlm fī Taqbīh al-Hikam.
289. Jabr al-Kasīr.
290. al-Ifādāt al-Yaumīyyah min al-Ifādāt al-Qaumīyyah.
291. as-Sunnah al-Jalīyyah fī al-Chishtīyyah al-ʿAlīyyah.
292. al-Basā’ir fī ad-Dawā’ir.
293. Sarāb ash-Sharāb (it is a part of *as-Sunnah al-Jalīyyah*).
294. Tamīz al-ʿIshq min al-Fisq.
295. Radd at-Tawahhud fī at-Talāq Dhāt at-Taʿaddud (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
296. Binā’ al-Qabr ʿalā Binā’ al-Jabr.
297. Tamhīd al-Farash Tahdīd al-ʿArsh.
298. al-Irshād ilā Mas’alah al-Istiʿdād (it is a part of *at-Tasharruf* volume three).
299. al-Has-hasah fī Hukm al-Waswasah (it is a part of *at-Tasharruf* volume three).
300. ʿUbūr al-Barārī fī Surūr adh-Dharārī (it is a part of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*).
301. Khayr al-Ikhtibār fī Khabar al-Ikhtiyār (malfūz).
302. Shajarah al-Murād (it is a part of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*).
303. Bawādir an-Nawādir.[1]
304. Shams al-Fadā’il li Tams ar-Radhā’il (it is a part of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*).
305. Shaq al-Jayb ʿan Haq al-Ghayb (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).

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[1] This is a list of rare rulings. It is being published in parts in *al-Ashraf*, Lucknow.

306. at-Tawājuh fī mā Yataʿallaqu bi at-Tashābuh (it is a part of *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān* at the beginning of Sūral Āl ʿImrān).
307. Taẖqīq at-Tashbīh bi Ahl al-Fassāẖ Liman lā Yūrīd Adā' al-Mahr fī Nikāẖ ar-Rijāl (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
308. Taʿdīl Ahl ad-Dahr fī Darajah Taqlīl al-Mahr.
309. al-Iʿtidāl fī Mutābaʿah ar-Rijāl (it is a part of *Tarbīyyat*).
310. Kalimah al-Qaum fī H̱ikmah as̱-S̱aum (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
311. al-H̱īlah an-Nājizah bi Mushārakah ash-Shafīʿ al-Karīm.
312. Aʿdād al-Jannah (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
313. Nayl al-Murād fī Safar Ganj Murādābād (it is a part of *Arwāẖ Thalāthah*).
314. Malfūẕ Fuyūḏ al-Khāliq (it is a part of *al-Hādī*).
315. Malfūẕ Saʿād aṯ-Ṯālibīn (it is a part of *Qāsim al-ʿUlūm*).
316. Tafs̱īl Maẖmūdīyyat Amr Ṯabʿī (it is a part of *Tarbīyyat*).
317. Ṯulūʿ al-Badr fī Suṯūʿ al-Qadr (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
318. al-H̱ukm al-H̱aqqānī fī al-H̱arb al-Āghā Khānī (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
319. Tas̱-hīẖ al-Khiyāl (malfūẕ).
320. Amāthil al-Aqwal li Afāḏil ar-Rijāl (it is a part of *Kashkūl*).
321. Nāfiʿ al-Ishārah ilā Manāfiʿ al-Istikhārah (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
322. Aẖkām al-Ayqān li Aqsām al-Iṯmīnān (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
323. ʿIlāj al-Khiyāl (it is a part of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*).
324. Rafʿ al-Ghalaṯ li Dafʿ ash-Shaṯaṯ.
325. Tas-hīl aṯ-Ṯarīq (it is a part of *Tarbīyyat*).
326. Kalimah al-H̱aq (malfūẕ – it is a part of *al-Hādī*).
327. al-Kalām al-H̱asan (malfūẕ – it is from Ashraf al-ʿUlūm).
328. Risālah Baẖth Faḏl Sayyid al-Qubūr ʿalā Kulli Makān Mazūr (it is a part of *Tarjīẖ ar-Rājiẖ* 1354 A.H.).
329. ash-Shawāriq fī al-Khawāriq.
330. Malfūẕ Sirāj as̱-S̱irāṯ (it is from *al-Ashraf*).

331. Mukālamah Barr Muhākamah (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
332. at-Tabdīl min ath-Thaqīl ilā at-Taʿdīl yā at-Tanzīl min at-Taʿdīl ilā at-Tas-hīl.[1]
333. Wudūh at-Tarīq.[2]
334. Futūh at-Tarīq.[3]
335. Rūh at-Tarīq.[4]
336. Istihbāb ad-Daʿwāt (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
337. Butlān al-Ahlām bi Burhān al-Ahkām (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
338. at-Taʿarruf fī Tahqīq Mas'alah at-Tasarruf (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
339. Jamʿ ad-Duʿā' maʿa ar-Radā bi al-Qadā' (it is a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*).
340. Jalwah-e-Yūsuf (malfūz – it is a part of *al-Ashraf*).
341. Nazr ʿInāyat (malfūz – it is a part of *al-Ashraf*).
342. Armughān ʿĪd (malfūz).
343. ʿIbādah ar-Rahmān.
344. Dunyān kī Pastī Aur Dīn kī Mastī (malfūz).
345. Sarmāyah-e-Hastī.[5]

Attachment

In addition to the addendum written by Maulānā Gangohī *quddisa sirruhu* to *Fayslah Haft Mas'alah* (book number 68), I wrote an addendum which was published separately. However, despite searching for it, I could not find it at the time when drawing up the book list. I found it recently. Bearing in mind that it is not obtainable, I am quoting it here. It would be appropriate to include it as an addendum to *Fayslah Haft*

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[1] With a practical addendum. It is a part of *Husn al-ʿAzīz.* These are two titles on two different considerations as explained in the book itself.

[2] It is a part of *an-Nūr* dated Ramadān 1349 A.H. A subject in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* from pages 3, and 8-16 make reference to it.

[3] It is a part of *an-Nūr* dated Jumādā al-Ūlā 1350 A.H. A subject in *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* from pages 6, and 10-14 make reference to it. The title of these two (333 and 334) was not published until now.

[4] It is a part of *an-Nūr* dated Dhū al-Hijjah 1350 A.H. A subject in Tarbīyyatus Sālik from pages 3, 10, and 4-13 makes reference to it. Its title has also been published.

[5] These two (344 and 345) are parts of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*.

Mas'alah when printing it in future. Ashraf ʿAlī. Muharram 1355 A.H.

Addendum to Fayslah Haft Mas'alah

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī, the servant in the court of Hadrat Shaykh al-Mashā'ikh Sayyid as-Sādāt Maulānā wa Murshidunā al-Hāfiz al-Hāj ash-Shāh Muhammad Imdādullāh Sāhib, *may his blessings be multiplied*, presents to his Pīr Bhāis and other readers with regard to *Fayslah Haft Mas'alah*. Hadrat [Hājī Sāhib] is finding it extremely difficult to write this book due to his severe physical weakness. Acting under the instruction of Hadrat, this servant penned a few rulings – by way of a settling the issue - which were published about four years ago. Some people misunderstood the fundamental purpose of this book and considered Hadrat to have unilaterally approved of those actions which are mentioned in the book. This is totally untrue. Therefore, solely for the sake of well-wishing, and considering it essential to clarify Hadrat's purpose and investigation, I am making a general announcement so that I am saved from the sin of concealing the truth and causing confusion to others. It is clear that the manner and form in which these issues and actions are in vogue is causing most of the masses – especially the ignoramuses of India – to fall into various types of creedal and practical evils which an intelligent, clever and equitable person can experience and observe.

For example: (1) Not to consider certain restrictions about maulūd to be emphatic and for the heart to feel restricted when the restrictions are discarded. (2) Apart from emphasising on the restrictions for īsāl-e-thawāb, if it is for the souls of the auliyā', then to believe that they [auliyā'] can fulfil one's needs, and when these restrictions are not adhered to, then to fear that they [auliyā'] will cause harm to one. If it is for the souls of relatives, then in most cases it is done for name and fame; and if it is not done, then one fears criticism from people and relatives. (3) The presence of mostly amusement-seekers and deviates in the assemblies of simāʿ. (4) Intermingling with young boys and women. (5) The assembly of flagrant sinners and immoral people in ʿurs. (6) If they are not called, then to take loans merely to fulfil a custom. (7) The readers who are called to these functions read for the sake of the respectable

host so that they can receive food and sweetmeats from him. (8) Some ignorant people call upon those apart from Allāh *taʿālā* and believe that they [apart from Allāh] are all-knowing and all-powerful. (9) When their task is fulfilled, they believe that they [those apart from Allāh] were the ones who fulfilled the task for them. (10) Laziness in attending the first congregation [of salāh] due to reliance on the second congregation. (11) Missing the first congregation due to preoccupation in smoking the huqqah and engaging in futile conversations; and not showing any remorse for missing the congregation. (12) To believe in the powerlessness of Allāh as regards these last issues. There are many similar evils, the details of which can be gauged from study and observation. Hadrat [Hājī Sāhib] never considers these evils, their preludes and their causes to be permissible.

To harbour such thoughts about Hadrat and thereby hold on to the permissibility of such acts or to have evil thoughts about Hadrat are signs of ignorance about his total adherence to the Sharīʿah and the objective of his speech. The essence of his statement is that the firm manner in which people are holding on to these practices is certainly a bidʿah because the book clearly states that it is a bidʿah to introduce non-Dīn into Dīn. Thus, those who emphasise on these restrictions which are permissible in themselves are the very people who are introducing non-Dīn into Dīn. In this regard they are considered to be opponents of the truth. If the restrictions and customs are not adhered to, and no evils are committed, then it is permissible to carry out these acts occasionally. It would be extremism on the part of those who say that they are harām. Here we will say that the truth is being permitted. Hadrat considered both to be on the truth. Consequently, in Hadrat's personally sealed and stamped letter which came to certain elders, these words are mentioned in it: "the dhikr in itself is permissible but the restrictions are bidʿah." Similarly, there are details with regard to the other issues. These can be understood after pondering over the principles of the Sharīʿah. No person can have the occasion for doubts and misgivings after this clarification. If any text of this book is found to be contrary to this explanation, it must be considered to be my text, and Hadrat *dāmat fuyūduhum wa barakātuhum* must be believed to be completely innocent and free from it. Our sole responsibility is to convey the message.

Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1316 A.H.

Note: These two addendums are based on the principles of the Sharīʿah. We now quote a righteous dream which, in a Hadīth, is referred to as a glad tiding. The person who saw the dream is Janāb Maulānā Hāfiz Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the former principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband and the son of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib [Nānautwī] *quddisa sirruhu*. The narrator of the dream is his true successor, Maulwī Hāfiz Qārī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib, the principal of the same Dār al-ʿUlūm. It is quoted in the exact words of the narrator. It is a unique dream which consists of extraordinary facts.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

I heard the following incident from my respected father *rahimahullāh*. He said: There was a time when *Fayslah Haft Mas'alah* was printed and attributed to Hadrat Murshīd ʿĀlam Hājī Imdādullāh *quddisa sirruhu*. We were faced by a severe dilemma because we could not agree with it, and if we opposed it, our affiliation with Hadrat would come before us. We were extremely confused. During the same period I saw a dream. There was a large court and Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* entered. I also came in and the discussion revolved around *Haft Mas'alah*. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said: "Bhāi! Why are the ʿulamā' behaving with so much extremism in this regard? There is certainly some leeway." I said: "Hadrat, there is no leeway. If leeway is given, the limits of the rulings will be broken." He said: "This in itself appears to be extremism." I then said with utmost respect: "Hadrat maybe correct in whatever he is saying but the jurists are certainly saying to the contrary." My father continues: "I continued back and forth in my argument with Hadrat, but I did not see even an iota's difference in Hadrat's greatness."

Hadrat finally said: "Okay, let's cut the story short. What if Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself passes a decision in this regard? What will you say?" I replied: "Hadrat, who can ever have the audacity to act against him?" He said: "Very well, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself will come here and pass a decision between you and me."

My father said: I was overjoyed by this because I thought to myself that at least I will have an opportunity of setting eyes on Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. At the same time, the greatness of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib increased in my heart because I thought to myself: Look at the rank which Allāh *taʿālā* conferred to our elders! They can revert directly to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to settle their affairs, and they can also call him. A short while later, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said: "Get ready, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is about to come in."

I then saw an august group appearing from the entrance of the court. When the group drew near, I noticed Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* at the front with the entire group of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* walking behind him. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* looked exactly like Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He was wearing a thin muslin kurtah without any vest underneath. His blessed body was glittering, as though rays were emanating from it. He had a five-piece topī on his blessed head. The topī covered his head up to his ears. His face was glittering like pure gold. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* entered the court, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib proceeded respectfully to one corner and stood there. I proceeded to the opposite corner, and stood respectfully and in awe with my hands tied. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* walked towards me, stood right in front of me, placed his blessed hand on my shoulder and said in a loud voice: "Hājī Sāhib! Whatever this boy is saying is correct."

On hearing this, my happiness knew no end. At the same time, the greatness of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib increased in my heart because I thought of the high rank which Allāh *taʿālā* conferred on our elders. Look at how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* came in without any formality and how he addressed him without any ceremony. On hearing Rasūlullāh's words, Hadrat Hājī Sāhib repeatedly said: "You are correct, you are correct." He was lowering himself while saying this, brought his head close to his feet, then stood upright. He then repeated the same words and repeated the whole process.

Hadrat Hājī Sāhib did this seven times. The entire assembly was pin-drop silent. Everyone was standing still because Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself was standing.

My father continues: On seeing Rasūlullāh's affection and attention, I took the courage and said: "O Rasūlullāh! Your present appearance is different from the description which we read in the books of Hadīth. You are looking like Hadrat Gangohī." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "My original appearance is what you read in the books of Hadīth. However, I adopted the appearance of Gangohī because you have love and affinity with him." My love for and confidence in Hadrat Gangohī increased even more when I heard this, and the close ranks of proximity of our elders became clear to me. There was silence for a few minutes. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib stood up with utmost respect with his head lowered. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* addressed him: "Hājī Sāhib do you permit me to leave now?" Hājī Sāhib replied respectfully: "Whatever is your blessed wish." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his entire entourage departed in the same way as they had entered, and my eyes opened.

I (my father is speaking) wrote this dream and sent it to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. I learnt later on that he was overcome by a condition of selflessness and said something to the effect: "If only this dream could be written and placed with me in my grave, perhaps it will be a certificate in my favour."

Muhammad Tayyib, *may Allāh forgive him.*

Mawā'iz

(1) Ādāb al-Masājid. (2) Muhimmāt ad-Duʿā', part 1. (3) Muhimmāt ad-Duʿā', part 2. (4) Sīrah as-Sūfī. (5) Istikhfāf al-Maʿāsī. (6) Huqūq al-Muʿāsharat. (7) al-Ikhlās, part 1. (8) al-Ikhlās, part 2. (9) Islāh an-Nisā'. (10) Dhamm al-Hawā.[1] (11) Tat-hīr Ramadān. (12) Huqūq al-Qur'ān. (13) ʿIlāj al-Kibr. (14) Ghadd al-Basar. (15) Tat-hīr al-Aʿdā'. (16) Hayāt Tayyibah. (17) Tas-hīl al-Islāh. (18) Ahkām al-ʿAshar al-Akhīr. (19) al-Kamāl as-Saum wa al-ʿĪd. (20) Taqwīm az-Zaygh.[2] (21) Darūrah al-Iʿtinā' bi ad-Dīn. (22) Darūrah al-ʿIlm bi ad-Dīn. (23) Darūrah al-ʿAmal bi ad-Dīn. (24) Tarīq al-Qurb. (25) Fadā'il al-ʿIlm wa al-Khashyah. (26) Targhīb al-Ad-hiyah. (27) Darūrah at-Taubah. (28) Tafsīl at-Taubah. (29) Takmīl al-Islām. (30) Tark al-Maʿāsī.[3] (31) Islāh an-Nafs. (32) Tafādul al-Aʿmāl. (33) ar-Radā bi ad-

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[1] These ten lectures collectively form part one of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*
[2] These ten lectures collectively form part two of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*
[3] These ten lectures collectively form part three of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*

Dunyā. (34) al-Ittiʿāz bi al-Ghayr. (35) Talab al-ʿIlm. (36) Ta'dīb al-Maʿsiyah. (37) Hubb al-ʿĀjilah. (38) Izālah al-Ghaflah. (39) Qatʿ at-Tamannī. (40) Taysīr al-Islāh.[1]

(41) Darūrah al-ʿUlamā'. (42) Tarīq an-Najāt. (43) Nisyān an-Nafs. (44) Taʿlīm al-Bayān. (45) Āthār al-Mahabbah. (46) Ihsān at-Tadbīr. (47) Fadl al-ʿIlm wa al-ʿAmal. (48) Matāʿ ad-Dunyā. (49) Madār al-Maʿsiyah. (50) al-ʿAmal li al-ʿUlamā'.[2] (51) Taʿzīm ash-Shaʿā'ir. (52) at-Tasaddī li al-Ghayr. (53) Itāʿah al-Ahkām. (54) Khawās al-Khashyah. (55) Dhikr al-Maut. (56) Ilghā' al-Mujāzafah. (57) Sharaf al-Mukālamah. (58) Tarjīh al-Mafsadah ʿalā al-Maslahah. (59) Ikhtiyār al-Khalīl. (60) Shart al-Īmān.[3] (61) Ghawā'il al-Ghadab. (62) Munāzaʿah al-Hawā. (63) as-Saum. (64) ash-Shukr. (65) at-Tanbīh. (66) al-Bāqī.[4] (67) Haq al-Itāʿah. (68) ad-Dīn al-Khālis. (69) ʿAdl al-Jāhilīyyah. (70) Nidā' Ramadān. (71) Wahdah al-Hubb. (72) Shuʿab al-Īmān. (73) al-Waqt. (74) Shaʿbān. (75) as-Siyām. (76) al-Fitr.[5] (77) Rūh as-Siyām. (78) Rūh al-Qiyām. (79) Rūh al-Jiwār. (80) Rūh al-Iftār.

(81) Rūh al-ʿAjj wa ath-Thajj. (82) Nūr as-Sudūr. [6] (83) al-Istighfār. (84) Mawāʿiz Ashrafīyyah fī al-Khushūʿ.[7] (85) al-Ittifāq.[8] (86) az-Zulm. (87) al-Khalat. (88) al-Mubāh. (89) as-Su'āl. (90) at-Tawakkul. (91) Ahbar.[9] (92) at-Tahdhīb no. 1. (93) at-Tahdhīb no. 2. (94) at-Tahdhīb no. 3. (95) at-Tahdhīb no. 4. (96) at-Tahdhīb no. 5. (97) at-Tahdhīb no. 6.[10] (98) al-Khudūʿ. (99) ʿAmal adh-Dhurrah. (100) Ra's ar-Rabīʿayn al-Mushtamal ʿalā Juz'ayn al-Hubūr li Nūr as-Sudūr wa al-Khudūr li al-Umūr. (101) ash-Shudhūr. (102) al-Ghadab. (103) Mazāhir al-

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[1] These ten lectures collectively form part four of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*
[2] These ten lectures collectively form part five of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*
[3] These ten lectures collectively form part six of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*
[4] These six lectures collectively form part seven of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat. Al-Bāqī* has been printed separately.
[5] These ten lectures collectively form part eight of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat.*
[6] Lectures 77-82 have been published by the title *Haft Akhtar.*
[7] Later on this lecture was given the title *Lubb al-ʿIbādah.*
[8] These last three lectures form part one of *at-Tadhkīr* but the words *Ashraf al-Mawā'iz* were mistakenly printed on the cover.
[9] These last six lectures form part two of *at-Tadhkīr* and here too the words *Ashraf al-Mawā'iz* were mistakenly printed on the cover.
[10] These last six lectures form part three of *at-Tadhkīr.*

Ahwāl. (104) al-Iftidāh.[1] (105) al-Qard. (106) Tafsīl adh-Dhikr. (107) at-Tawajjuh. (108) al-ʿIffah. (109) al-ʿIzzah. (110) Ijābah ad-Dāʿī.

(111) al-Māl wa al-Jāh. (112) Ittibāʿ al-Munīb. (113) Kayf al-Adhā. (114) al-Fadl al-ʿAzīm. (115) al-Isrāf. (116) adh-Dhikr. (117) al-Khiyānah. (118) ad-Dunyā.[2] (119) Dhikr ar-Rasūl. (120) Rafʿ al-Mawāniʿ. (121) Shukr an-Niʿmah. (122) az-Zāhir. (123) Islāh al-Yatāmā. (124) Taʿlīm al-ʿIlm. (125) at-Taqwā. (126) al-Murād. (127) Dawāʾ ad-Dīq. (128) Ihsān al-Islām. (129) at-Taʿmīm li Taʿlīm al-Qurʾān al-Karīm. (130) Tark mā lā Yaʿnī. (131) Taʿmīm at-Taʿlīm. (132) al-Kamāl fī ad-Dīn li an-Nisāʾ. (133) Nafy al-Haraj. (134) al-Bāb li Ūlī al-Albāb. (135) as-Salām at-Tahqīqī. (136) ad-Daʿwah ilā Allāh. (137) Darjāt al-Islām. (138) Naqd al-Labīb fī ʿAqd al-Habīb. (139) Tahqīq ash-Shukr. (140) Rajāʾ al-Liqāʾ. (141) Asbāb al-Fadāʾil. (142) Mahāsin al-Islām. (143) Wamadān fī Ramadān. (144) Shukr al-Mathnawī. (145) ʿŪd al-ʿĪd. (146) ʿAud al-ʿĪd. (147) al-Iʿtisām bi Hablillāh. (148) Īwāʾ al-Yatāmā. (149) Tarjīh al-Ākhirah. (150) Hurumāt al-Hudūd. (151) Millat Ibrāhīm. (152) al-ʿIbādah. (153) ar-Rafʿ wa al-Wadʿ. (154) al-Isʿād wa al-ʿĪʿād. (155) al-ʿIbrah bi Dhabh al-Baqarah.

(156) al-Hudā wa al-Maghfirah. (157) Dhamm an-Nisyān. (158) Taqlīl at-Taʿām.[3] (159) A lecture delivered in Murādābād, Kasraul related to the verse Iqtaraba li an-Nās…[4] (160) A lecture delivered in Murādābād Shāhī Masjid related to the verse Wa Taʿāwanū ʿalā al-Birr.[5] (161) A lecture delivered in Charthāwal on Masāʾil Maut.[6] (162) A lecture delivered in Charthāwal related to the verse Mā Yalfizu Min Qaul…[7] (163) A lecture delivered in Meerut related to the verse Wa Ammā Man

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[1] These last seven lectures (98-104) are published as *Husn al-Mauʿizat.*

[2] Lectures 105-118 are published as *adh-Dhikrā.*

[3] These 40 lectures (119-158) have been published as *at-Tablīgh.*

[4] It was later given the title *Qurb al-Hisāb.*

[5] It was later given the title *at-Taʿāwun ʿalā al-Khayr.*

[6] It was later given the title *Yaqzah an-Nāʾim.*

[7] It is printed in *at-Tadhkīr* part one under the title *Hifz al-Lisān.* These last four lectures collectively form part one of *Ashraf al-Mawāʾiz.*

Khāfa Maqāma Rabbihi...[1] (164) at-Tabshīr. (165) as-Salāh. (166) al-Hayāt.[2] (167) Rūh al-Arwāh. (168) Rāhat al-Qulūb. (169) Tatimmah al-Hikmat.[3] (170) ad-Duʻā'. (171) Shauq al-Liqā'. (172) Tadhkīr al-Ākhirah. (173) Fawā'id as-Suhbah. (174) Tijārat-e-Ākhirah. (175) an-Nūr. (176) az-Zuhūr. (177) as-Surūr. (178) Awwal al-Aʻmāl. (179) Ākhir al-Aʻmāl. (180) al-Kamāl fī ad-Dīn li ar-Rijāl.

(181) Maʻrifah al-Haqā'iq. (182) Miftāh al-Khayr. (183) al-ʻĀqilāt al-Ghāfilāt. (184) al-Basīr bi al-Bashīr. (185) ash-Sharīʻah. (186) ad-Dahāyā. (187) al-Janāh. (188) Ijlā' li al-Ibtilā'. (189) al-Hajj al-Mabrūr. (190) Taqlīl al-Manām. (191) Taqlīl al-Kalām. (192) Taqlīl al-Ikhtilāt maʻa al-Anām. (193) Tah-sīl al-Marām.[4] (194) Haqīqah al-Habr. (195) Mā ʻAlayhi al-Habr. (196) Zakāt an-Nafs. (197) Tafsīl ad-Dīn. (198) Ahkām al-Māl. (199) Asbāb al-Fitnah. (200) Huqūq al-Bayt. (201) Sabīl an-Najāh. (202) al-Bātin. (203) Ādāb at-Tablīgh. (204) al-Maurid al-Farsakhī. (205) Asrār al-ʻIbādah. (206) Āthār al-ʻIbādah. (207) Khayr al-Hayāt wa Khayr al-Mamāt. (208) as-Sauq li Ahl ash-Shauq. (209) Istimrār at-Taubah. (210) – (211) Irdā' al-Haq, number 1 and 2. (212) al-ʻAjj wa ath-Thajj wa al-Lajj. (213) Jamāl al-Jalīl. (214) Matāhir al-Amwāl. (215) Mazāhir al-Āmāl. (216) Matāhir al-Aqwāl. (217) Hamm al-Ākhirah. (218) ʻIsm as-Sunūf. (219) an-Niswān fī Ramadān. (220) ad-Dawām ʻalā al-Islām.

(221) al-Istiqāmah. (222) Asbāb al-Ghaflah. (223) Kauthar al-ʻUlūm. (224) Takmīl al-Inʻām. (225) Alfāz al-Qur'ān. (226) al-Maʻraq wa ar-Rahīq bi al-ʻIbar. (227) at-Tahsīl wa at-Tas-hīl. (228) and (229) Ijrā' as-Siyām bi al-Insirām, part 1&2. (230) at-Tawāsī bi al-Haq. (231) at-Tawāsī bi as-Sabr. (232) al-Fasl wa al-Fisāl. (233) al-Ajr an-Nabīl. (234) an-Niʻam al-Marghūbah. (235) at-Taysīr li at-Tasyīr. (236) al-Hudūd wa al-Quyūd. (237) Fanā' an-Nufūs. (238) Ifnā' al-Mahbūb. (239) at-Taʻarruf bi at-Tasarruf. (240) Murāqabah al-Ard. (241) Khayr al-Irshād. (242) ad-Dunyā wa al-Ākhirah. (243) at-Tarāhum fī at-Tarāhum. (244) al-Ghālib li at-Tālib. (245) Malfūz at-Tāhūn, damīmah waʻz Khayr al-Hayāt. (246) al-Istimāʻ wa al-Ittibāʻ. (247) al-Wasl

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[1] It was later printed under the title *Thamarāt al-Khauf*. It is to be found in *Ashraf al-Mawā'iz* part two.

[2] These last three lectures are printed as *al-Bushrā*.

[3] This lecture is printed as a marginal note to *Duʻāt al-Millah*.

[4] These last four together with lecture number 158 are titled *Hawās Khamsah.*

wa al-Fasl. (248) Rafʿ al-Iltibās. (249) al-Jamʿayn Bayna an-Nafʿayn. (250) Nūr an-Nūr. (251) ar-Rābitah. (252) al-Jabr bi al-Habr. (253) al-Isābah fī Maʿnā al-Ijābah. (254) as-Sabr wa as-Salāh. (255) al-Haj. (256) Sabīl as-Saʿīd. (257) as-Sabr bi as-Sabr. (258) al-Murāqabah. (259) Ikmāl al-ʿIddah. (260) al-Fānī. (261) Asl al-ʿIbādah. (262) al-Mujāhadah. (263) al-Irtiyāb wa al-Ightiyāb. (264) Akbar al-Aʿmāl. (265) Dār al-Masʿūd Maʿa Tahqīq at-Tasdīq. (266) al-ʿAbd ar-Rabbānī. (267) ar-Raghbah al-Marghūbah. (268) ar-Rahīl ilā al-Hiyal. (269) al-ʿĪd wa al-Waʿīd. (270) Dawā' al-Ghaflah.

(271) an-Nafahāt fī al-Awqāt. (272) al-Insidād li al-Fasād. (273) as-Salāt fī as-Salāt. (274) al-Yusr Maʿa al-ʿUsr. (275) Gharīb ad-Dunyā. (276) ʿAmal ash-Shukr. (277) Islāh Dhāt al-Bayn. (278) Tarīq al-Qalandar. (279) al-ʿUshr. (280) al-ʿAshr. (281) Āthār al-Haubah fī Asrār at-Taubah. (282) al-Mawaddah ar-Rahmānīyyah. (283) at-Tashbīt bi Murāqabah at-Tasbīt. (284) al-Akramīyyah bi al-Aʿmalīyyah wa al-Aʿlamīyyah. (285) al-Ukhuwwah. (286) ʿIlāj al-Hirs. (287) al-ʿIlm wa al-Khashyah. (288) Infāq al-Mahbūb. (289) and (290) Muwāsāt al-Musābīn, part 1&2. (291) Huqūq as-Sarrā' wa ad-Darrā'. (292) Nashr ar-Rahmah. (293) Shukr al-ʿAtā'. (294) Shabb Mubārak. (295) Shaʿbān fī Shaʿbān. (296) Muthallath Ramadān. (297) al-ʿItq Min an-Nīrān. (298) Anwār as-Sirāj. (299) al-Itmīnān bi ad-Dunyā. (300) Rutūbah al-Lisān. (301) Shifā' al-ʿAyy. (302) Āthār al-Murabbaʿ. (303) al-Imtihān. (304) Takmīl al-Aʿmāl bi Tabdīl al-Ahwāl. (305) Sharā'it at-Tāʿah. (306) al-Makrūhāt. (307) Kisā' an-Nisā'. (308) al-Islām al-Haqīqī. (309) al-Kāf. (310) al-Itmām li Niʿmah al-Islām, part one. (311) al-Itmām li Niʿmah al-Islām, part two. (312) Izālah al-Ghayn ʿan Ālah al-ʿAyn. (313) Subah Ummīd. (314) Shām Khūrshīd. (315) ar-Rahmah ʿalā al-Ummah. (316) Dastūr Sahāranpūr. (317) Ādāb al-Musāb. (318) al-Qāf. (319) Iʿānah an-Nāfiʿ. (320) Shukr as-Sawānih. (321) Tahrīm al-Muharram.

Details of work done by other scholars on Hadrat Wālā's writings

Reference to this was made in the prelude to the list of written works.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* scholars have paid attention to my works for the sake of benefit to different levels of people. Some of them did it by way of summarizing and selecting, others by way of simplifying, and yet others by way of translating them into other languages. The entire list is

attached here (by the grace of Allāh, this work is continuing but Hadrat Wālā has stopped regulating it, although he does check it sometimes, depending on the need - compiler).

	Title of New Work	Title of Original	Person
1	Hisāb kī Āmad	This is a simplified version[1] of the 1st lecture of *Ashraf al-Mawā'iz* vol. one.	Maulwī Anwār al-Haqq Sāhib Amrauhī, a few may have been done by others.
2	Hādirī kā Khauf	A simplified version of the 2nd lecture of *Ashraf al-Mawā'iz* vol. one.	
3	Ramadān kā Khālis Rakhnā	Tas-hīl[2] Tat-hīr Ramadān.	
4	Qur'ān Ke Huqūq	Tas-hīl Huqūq al-Qur'ān	
5	Takabbur Kā 'Ilāj	Tas-hīl 'Ilāj al-Kibr	
6	Pākīzah Kā 'Ilāj	Hayāt Tayyibah[3]	
7	Islāh kā Āsān Tarīqah	Tas-hīl Tas-hīl al-Islāh[4]	
8	Akhīr 'Asharah ke Ahkām	Tas-hīl Ahkām al-'Asharah	
9	Saum aur 'Īd kī Takmīl	Tas-hīl Ikmāl as-Saum wa al-'Īd	
10	Nigāh kī Hifāzat	Tas-hīl Ghadd al-Basar	
11	A'dā kā Pāk Rakhnā	Tas-hīl Tat-hīr al-A'dā'	
12	Kajī kī Durustī	Tas-hīl Taqwīm az-	

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[1] The essence of a simplified version is that the text has been simplified for the masses, and texts which were generally understood were removed. (compiler)
[2] From now on, the word "Tas-hīl" (simplified version) will be added before the original title.
[3] These first six have been published in the series *Tas-hīl al-Mawā'iz*.

[4] This book has been published in *al-Hādī*, Delhi, and the person has expressed his intention to publish future *Mawā'iz* as well.

		Zaygh	
13	Ihtimām Dīn kī Darūrat	Tas-hīl Darūrah al-I‘tinā’ bi ad-Dīn	
14	‘Ilm Dīn kī Darūrat	Tas-hīl Darūrah al-‘Ilm bi ad-Dīn	
15	‘Amal Dīn kī Darūrat	Tas-hīl Darūrah al-‘Amal fī ad-Dīn	
16	Maqbūlīyyat kā Tarīq	Tas-hīl Tarīq al-Qurb	
17	‘Ilm aur Khauf ke Fadā’il	Tas-hīl Fadā’il al-‘Ilm wa al-Khashyah	
18	Qurbānī kī Targhīb	Tas-hīl Targhīb al-Ud-hiyah	
19	Taubah kī Darūrat	Tas-hīl Darūrah at-Taubah	
20	Taubah kī Tafsīl	Tas-hīl Darūrah at-Taubah	
21	Islam kī Takmīl	Tas-hīl Takmīl al-Islam	
22	Ma‘āsī kā Tark	Tas-hīl Tark al-Ma‘āsī	
23	Masjid ke Ādāb	Tas-hīl Ādāb al-Masājid	
24	Du‘ā’ ke Sharā’it (1)	Tas-hīl Muhimmāt ad-Du‘ā’ (1)	
25	Du‘ā’ ke Sharā’it (2)	Tas-hīl Muhimmāt ad-Du‘ā’ (2)	
26	Sūfī kā Tarīq	Tas-hīl Sīrah as-Sūfī	
27	Gunāho kā Sarsarī Samajhnā	Tas-hīl Istikhfāf al-Ma‘āsī	
28	Mu‘āsharat ke Huqūq	Tas-hīl Huqūq al-Mu‘āsharat	
29	Ikhlās (1)	Tas-hīl al-Ikhlās (1)	
30	Ikhlās (2)	Tas-hīl al-Ikhlās (2)	
31	‘Auratau kī Islāh	Tas-hīl Islāh an-Nisā’	
32	Ittibā‘-e-Nafs kī Burā’ī	Tas-hīl Dhamm al-Hawā	
33	Amthāl ‘Ibrat	Parables and stories have been collected from my *Mawā’iz*.	

34	ʻIlm Ghayr Manqūl	A collection of themes which are considered to be inspired in the heart	Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib
35	Tafsīr al-Mawā'iz	Qur'ānic verses which form the bases of the *Mawā'iz* have been collated with a commentary of a few Ahādīth	Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib
36	ʻUlūm Imdādīyyah	A collection of the statements of Hadrat Murshid *alayhir rahmah* which were quoted by myself in the *Mawā'iz*	Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib
37	Abyāt Hikmat	A collection of poetry quoted by myself in the *Mawā'iz*	Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib
38	ʻArūs al-Mawā'iz	A collection of themes from the *Mawā'iz* which were considered to be most beneficial	Khwājah ʻAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib
39	Usūl al-Wusūl	The principles of sulūk have been collated from my writings.	Maulwī ʻAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib Phūlpūrī
40	Rafʻ ad-Dīq	A collection of discussions on spiritual retraction from my writings, especially from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*	Maulwī ʻAbd al-Majīd Sāhib Bichahrāyūnī
41	Ash-Shifā	An explanation of my themes in a question and answer format	Maulwī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib
42	Tarjumah Sindhī Jamāl al-Qur'ān	A Sindhī translation of *Jamāl al-Qur'ān*	Maulwī Sher Muhammad Sāhib Sindhī
43	Tarjumah Sindhī Jazā' al-	A Sindhī translation of *Jazā' al-Aʻmāl*	Miyā Dīn Muhammad

	Aʿmāl		Khayrpūrī
44	Tarjumah Sindhī Bahishtī Zewar	A Sindhī translation of *Bahishtī Zewar*	Miyā Dīn Muhammad Khayrpūrī
45	Tarjumah Bangla Qasd as-Sabīl	A Bangla translation of *Qasd as-Sabīl*	I cannot recall the translator
46	Tarjumah Sindhī Islāh ar-Rusūm	A Sindhī translation of *Islāh ar-Rusūm*	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Muhammad Purī
47	Tarjumah Sindhī Aʿmāl Qur'ānī	A Sindhī translation of *Aʿmāl Qur'ānī*	
48	A Bangla translation of important themes from *Bahishtī Zewar*		Maulwī Abū Naʿīm Sāhib, Nasīrābādī
49	Tarjumah Bangla Bahishtī Zewar	A Bangla translation of *Bahishtī Zewar*	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Halīm Sāhib
50	Tarjumah Sindhī Furūʿ al-Īmān	A Sindhī translation of *Furūʿ al-Īmān*.	Maulwī Dīn Muhammad Sāhib
51	Tarjumah Gujarātī Bahishtī Zewar	A Gujarati translation of *Bahishtī Zewar*	Maulwī Ghulām Muhammad Sāhib Randerī
52	Tarjumah Bangla Shauq Watan	A Bangla translation of *Shauq Watan*	Maulwī ʿAbd al-Hādī Sāhib
53	Tarjumah Sindhī Zād as-Saʿīd wa Nayl ash-Shifā'	A Sindhī translation of *Zād as-Saʿīd wa Nayl ash-Shifā'*	Maulwī Dīn Muhammad Sāhib
54	Tarjumah Sindhī Safā'ī Muʿāmalāt	A Sindhī translation of *Safā'ī Muʿāmalāt*	Maulwī Dīn Muhammad Sāhib
55	Tarjumah Gujarātī Qasd as-Sabīl	A Gujarati translation of *Qasd as-Sabīl*	Hāshim ibn Yūsuf, Bharūch
56	Tarjumah	A Sindhī translation	Dīn

	Sindhī ʿIlāj al-Qah̲t wa al-Wabā’	of *ʿIlāj al-Qah̲t wa al-Wabā’*	Muh̲ammad S̲āh̲ib
57	Tarjumah Pushtū Bahishtī Zewar	A Pushtū translation of *Bahishtī Zewar*	Ghauth Muh̲ammad Khān S̲āh̲ib
58	Tarjumah Bangla Jazā’ al-Aʿmāl	A Bangla translation of *Jazā’ al-Aʿmāl*	Mut̲īʿ ar-Rah̲mān S̲āh̲ib
59	Tarjumah Bangla Aghlāt̲ al-ʿAwām	A Bangla translation of *Aghlāt̲ al-ʿAwām*	ʿAbd as̲-S̲amad S̲āh̲ib
60	Tarjumah Angrezī Mathnawī Sharīf Mut̲ābiq Sharh̲ Kalīd Mathnawī	An English translation of *Kalīd Mathnawī*	Shaykh Rukn ad-Dīn, a senior sub-judge
61	Philosophy of Islam	An English translation of a selection of logical discussions from the *Mawā’iz̲*	Munshī Qubūl Ah̲mad S̲āh̲ib
62	Tarjumah Bangla Bahishtī Zewar	A Bangla translation of *Bahishtī Zewar*	Faqīr Ah̲mad S̲āh̲ib and Mah̲fūz̲ al-H̲aqq S̲āh̲ib
63	Tarjumah Alfāz̲ ʿArabīyyah wa Fārsīyyah wa Ashʿār Wāqiʿah Mawā’iz̲ Darr Urdu	Urdu translation of Arabic and Persian words and poems in the *Mawā’iz̲*	Muh̲ammad Qāsim ibn Marh̲ūm H̲āfiz Anwār Shāh, 132 Wick Street, Verulam, Natal, South Africa
64	Gujarati translation of five lectures: Dhikr ar-Rasūl, as-Surūr, az̲-Z̲uhūr, an-Nūr, T̲arīq Maulūd	Two additional lectures have been named for translation: al-H̲ubūr, al-H̲ud̲ūr. I advised the person that it will be more	Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rah̲mān ibn Maulānā Ghulām Muh̲ammad S̲ādiq, the Gujarati

	Sharīf	useful if he collates some of the themes from these lectures and then translates them.	translator of *Bahishtī Zewar*
65	Tarjumah Gujarati Tas-hīl al-Mawā’iz wa Ādāb al-Mu‘āsharat	Gujarati translation of *Tas-hīl al-Mawā’iz* and *Ādāb al-Mu‘āsharat*.	Maulānā Muhammad ‘Ārif Sāhib Randerī
66	Tarjumah Urdu Manzūm Zer wa Bamm	An Urdu translation of *Zer wa Bamm* in rhymed verse.	Qādī ‘Abd as-Samad Sāhib
67	Hawāshī Risālah al-Intibāhāt	Marginal notes to *al-Intibāhāt*	Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Mustafā Sāhib
68	Tibyān al-Bayān	Marginal notes to some places in *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur’ān*	Maulwī Sa‘īd Sāhib Marhūm
69	Ibānah al-Bayān	Marginal notes to *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur’ān*	
70	Tas-hīl Qasd as-Sabīl	Some of the texts in *Qasd as-Sabīl* could not be understood by the masses. These have been simplified.	Maulwī Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib
71	Ash-Sharāb at-Tahūr li al-‘Ushshāq as-Sakūr	A collection of some of my *Mawā’iz*. The person presented it in a large gathering in Rabī‘ al-Awwal and it proved most beneficial	Maulwī ‘Abd al-Majīd Sāhib, Rangoon. He also informed me that he simplified the lectures *Izālah al-Ghaflah* and *Ghadd al-Basar*

72. A simplified version of *Tarīq an-Najāt* by Muhammad ‘Uthmān Khān Dehlawī.

73. An English translation of *al-Ittifāq* by Master Qubūl Ahmad Sāhib.

74. An English translation of *Mah̲āsin al-Islām* has commenced (I have also learnt from Master S̲āh̲ib's letter that the first part of Philosophy of Islam which is a selection from 20 lectures has been translated and published).

75. A few scholars added references to *Bahishtī Zewar* and *Gauhar*. These have already been published.

76. Part three of *Bahishtī Zewar* has been published in the Burmese language. The remaining parts will also be published as per the letter from H̲ājī Muh̲ammad Yūsuf S̲āh̲ib and H̲ājī Dāwūd Hāshim S̲āh̲ib.

77. The first person [H̲ājī Muh̲ammad Yūsuf S̲āh̲ib] has informed me of his intention to translate *Taʿlīm at̲-T̲ālib* into Gujarati.

78. A translation of *Munājāt Maqbūl* in prose by H̲akīm Muh̲ammad Mus̲tafā S̲āh̲ib and a translation in rhymed verses. These were not included in the list because they were done under my request.

79. H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib has selected *al-Farā'id* from the *Mawā'iz̲*.

80. *al-Wā'iz̲ li ar-Rāghib fī al-Mawā'iz̲* selected by Maulwī Ishfāq ar-Rah̲mān S̲āh̲ib.

81. A Kashmīrī translation of a few essential themes from *az̲-Z̲āhir, Fawā'id as̲-S̲uh̲bah, Tadhkīr al-Ākhirah, Kalīd Mathnawī, Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* and *Qas̲d as-Sabīl* by Qut̲b ad-Dīn S̲āh̲ib.

82. A book titled *Najm al-Islām* in rhymed verses in the Kashmīrī language selected from *Imdād al-Fatāwā, Taʿlīm ad-Dīn, Fawā'id as̲-S̲uh̲bah, Bahishtī Zewar* and *H̲usn al-ʿAzīz* by Qut̲b ad-Dīn S̲āh̲ib. He writes that about one fifth of the subject matter was sourced from these books.

83. I received a letter from Ibrāhīm Baig Bhopālī dated 7 June 1946 from St. Piri (a city in America which is under French control). He states: "I intend translating *Bahishtī Gauhar* into French and publishing it together with a few themes from *Bahishtī Zewar* which are needed here." Permission was given to him via a few narrators.

84. Maulwī Muh̲ammad Saʿīd S̲āh̲ib who is mentioned under number 26 in the list of khulafā' has informed me that he has translated the following: (1) The entire section on *Taʿlīm Niswā*

which is a part of *Bahishtī Zewar*. (2) Chapter one section two of *Huqūq al-ʿIlm*, some parts of chapter one section three, three pages of chapter two. (3) First doubt and its answer from *Islāh al-Khiyāl*. (4) The gist of ten preludes from *Tahqīq Taʿlīm Angrezī*. All these have been compiled as a book and given to his associates for their study. He also informed me that other ʿulamā' intended proof reading it and publishing it.

85. I received a letter towards the end of Dhū al-Hijjah 1344 A.H. from ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib in which he states that he intends publishing a Bangla translation of all 11 parts of *Bahishtī Zewar* together with references and footnotes. He requested me not to deprive him of my prayers and permission.

86. I received a similar letter on 17 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1345 A.H. from Shams al-Haq Sāhib, a resident of Memon Singh, requesting permission to translate *Bahishtī Zewar* in the Bangla language either in prose or poetry.

87. I received a letter on 21 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1345 from Hājī Dāwūd Hāshim Sāhib in Rangoon stating that his company is undertaking to publish *Bahishtī Zewar* in the Burmese language.

88. Some residents of Delhi requested a simplified version of *Rāfiʿ ad-Dank*. This work has commenced.

89. A few associates are of the view that the Qur'ān should be translated into English. They have chosen *Bayān al-Qur'ān* for this purpose.

90. Shāh Lutf Rasūl Sāhib had commenced writing an abridged version of *Bayān al-Qur'ān*. He named it *Khulāsah al-Bayān fī Tarjumah al-Qur'ān*. However, he had reached up to the verse on usury in Sūrah al-Baqarah when he passed away.

91. Maulwī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib prepared an abridged version of the entire *Bayān al-Qur'ān* and Maulwī Shabbīr ʿAlī had it printed on the margins of the pocket Qur'āns.

92. Acting under the suggestion of a few associates, Maulwī Wasīyyullāh Sāhib has started a series of selections from the *Mawā'iz* on the following topics. These will be published as separate books. The topics are: *sulūk, aghlāt sālikīn, maʿānī Ahādīth, Maʿānī āyāt islāh, Nau Taʿlīm Yāftagān, Fiqh, Aqā'id, Tahqīq Aqwāl ʿĀrifīn, Aghlāt ʿulamā', Hikāyāt, Ashʿār.*

If each of the above themes are counted in this list, the number will be over 100. If some are counted together on the basis of similarity in the subject matter, the number certainly reaches 100. [The list is therefore recommencing from number 101].

101. An abridged version of *Bayān al-Qur'ān* in a unique manner by Maulwī Muhammad 'Īsā Sāhib. He intends printing it soon.

102. *Bahishtī Thamar* which is a selection from six parts of *Bahishtī Zewar* and *Bahishtī Gauhar* has been printed by the above Maulwi Sāhib under the encouragement of Deputy Inspector Sāhib.

103. The gist of a letter from Maulwī Dīn Muhammad Fīrozshāhī, Sha'bān 1345 A.H.

104. Maulānā Muhammad 'Īsā needs the printed version of *Bahishtī Thamar* so that the required translation can be sent over to the Sindhī madrasah at Kamrāwī post office, Chakrāwhā district, Dhaka.

105. The gist of a letter which I received from Rūh al-Amīn of Calcutta dated Dhū al-Qa'dah 1345 A.H. is that he intends printing the Bangla translation of *Tafsīl al-Kalām fī Hukm Taqbīl al-Aqdām* (mentioned in the list of books as number 232) and distributing it among Muslims.

106. I received a letter from Hājī Sher Muhammad Sāhib wherein he informs me that he completed the translation of the seventh part of *Bahishtī Zewar* in the Sindhī language.

107. I received a letter from 'Abd ar-Rashīd, a registrar and judge in Bengal, wherein he seeks permission to translate *Bahishtī Zewar* in the Bangla language.

108. Acting under the request of Khwājah 'Abd al-Wāhid Sāhib, Maulwī Wasīyyullāh Sāhib is abridging and simplifying *Bayān al-Qur'ān*.

109. I received a letter from Muhammad Mustaqīm 'Alī of district Sahlat wherein he seeks permission to translate *Haq as-Simā'* and *Safā'ī Mu'āmalāt* into the Bangla language.

110. I received a letter from Maulwī Maqsūdullāh Sāhib informing me that he has completed the translation and proofreading of *Qasd as-Sabīl* in the Bangla language. He also started with *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* and translated *Nashr at-Tīb* up

to the section on Miʿrāj, under the title *Ashraf al-Maulūd fī Dhikr Mahbūb al-Wadūd*. He also intends translating *Safā'ī Muʿāmalāt*. He expressed his intention of translating *Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* in another letter.

111. I received a letter from Muhammad Mustaqīm ʿAlī informing me that he intends translating *Thabāt as-Sutūr* in the Bangla language.

112. Quite some time back a person referenced the Ahādīth of *Kalīd Mathnawī* register one and titled it *Takhrīj Ahmadī.*

113. Maulwī Mazhar Ahmad of Bhopal informed me that he has commenced a Hindi translation of *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* because the people in that area know Hindi.

114. He also informed me of his intention to translate certain objectives from *al-Qasr al-Mushayyad* and a few themes from *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* into English, give the collection the title *Usūl Islāmīyyah Par Ek Guftagū* and to make efforts to include it in grade nine of the school.

115. Maulwī Khayr Muhammad Sāhib expressed his intention to simplify the book *al-Iqtisād*.

116. The above Maulānā has also started publishing *al-Idrāk* and *at-Tawassul* in his own writing.

117. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq Sāhib a teacher at Dīniyāt Islāmī High School, Rawalpindi [Pakistan] informed me via a letter that the school's head master intends teaching the biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the school. He seeks permission to prepare an abridged version of *Nashr at-Tīb* and teach it there. Permission was given to him.

118-121. Hājī Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib Rangoonī informed me of the following suggestions: (1) A simplified version of *Tahqīq Taʿlīm Angrezī*. A simplified version was prepared and sent to him. (2) To have the said book translated into English. (3) To have the said book translated into the Burmese language. (4) To have *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* translated into English. The adoption of these suggestions will be mentioned further on.

122. Hājī Dāwūd Hāshim Sāhib got *Bast al-Banān* and one section of *Hifz al-Īmān* translated into English.

123. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq Sāhib who is residing in Hyderabad has prepared a most useful list of a major portion of my *Mawā'iz*.

124. The said Maulānā also prepared detailed contents of *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* and gave it the title *Ā'inah Tarbīyyat.*

125. The said Maulānā collated the rules from *ʿIrfān Hāfiz* and gave it the title *Faydān Hāfiz*.

126. Maulwī Rahmatullāh Sāhib Rangoonī informed me via a letter that he translated part three of *Bahishtī Zewar* and *Bahishtī Gauhar* into the Burmese language.

127. The said Maulānā informed me that twelve sections of *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* have been collated, translated into Burmese and published. Hājī Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib expressed his intention of translating and publishing the remaining sections in the same manner.

128. The said Maulānā also wrote that *Tamhīd Taʿlīm ad-Dīn* is to be translated into Burmese and distributed to different areas of Burma.

129. The said Maulānā also informed me that the first part of *Bahishtī Zewar* with its addendum has already been translated into Burmese.

130. Maulwī Qabād Jahānābādī informed me in Ramadān that the Bangla translation of *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* up to Rūh No. 23 has been completed. Printing will commence in Shawwāl. He asked me to give it a title, so I decided on *Rūh al-Muslimīn.*

131. The said Maulānā also took selections from *Bahishtī Zewar*, translated them into Bangla and gave the book the title *Bahishtī Mewah*. This together with the translation of *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* are to be printed soon.

132. I received a letter from Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib of Dhaka informing me that he intends giving the Bangla translation of the first part of *Bahishtī Zewar* to the printing press.

133. I received a letter from Mahmūd Qāsim of Rānder informing me that the section related to masājid has been translated from *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* into Gujarati, and that Qāsim Surtī had it printed and distributed.

134. The said person also wrote that he intends translating *Namāz Kī ʿAqlī Khūbiyā* (this forms one part of *Science Aur Islam*) and *Sū'-e-Khātimah* into Gujarati. He then wrote to me again informing me that the translation of *Namāz Kī ʿAqlī Khūbiyā* has already been published.

135. Maulwī Asʿadullāh Sāhib, a teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr, has written an excellent commentary to one of my articles, viz. *al-Mukālamah Baynī wa Bayna Baʿd al-Maʿqūlīn*. I gave his commentary the title *al-Musālamah fī Sharh al-Mukālamah*. It is now a part of *Imdād al-Fatāwā*.

136. Master Qabūl Ahmad Sāhib informed me that he is currently translating *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* into English. He has completed almost a quarter of the book. Reference was made to this previously (refer to nos. 118-121).

137. The said person has also requested a copy of *al-Qasr al-Mushayyad* to translate it into English.

138. The said person informed me that he has completed the translation of *Thabāt as-Sutūr* with its addendums. It is presently under print and should be available within a month.

139. Maulwī Rahmatullāh Sāhib Rangoonī has informed me that a monthly periodical is published in the Burmese language from Rangoon. The prelude to *Bahishtī Zewar* in Burmese has been published in this periodical.

140. Maulwī Asʿadullāh Sāhib who was mentioned previously (no. 135) has expressed his intention to prepare a simplified version of *at-Taqsīr fī at-Tafsīr*.

Ten *Mawā'iz* from volume four of *Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat* have been simplified by Maulwī Anwār al-Haq Sāhib. The title of the simplified version with the original title is listed below. This list includes numbers 141-150.

141. Nafs kī Islāh – Islāh an-Nafs.

142. Neik Kāmau ke Darje – Tafādul al-Aʿmāl.

143. Dunyā se Radāmandī – ar-Radā bi ad-Dunyā.

144. Dūsrou se ʿIbrat Pakarnā – al-Ittiʿāz bi al-Ghayr.

145. ʿIlm kī Talab – Talab al-ʿIlm.

146. Musībat se ʿIbrat Pakarnā – at-Ta'dīb bi al-Musībah.

147. Dunyā kī Muhabbat – Hubb ad-Dunyā.

148. Ghaflat kā Dafī'ah – Izālah al-Ghaflah.

149. Ārzū kā Chournā – Qat' at-Tamannī.

150. Islāh kī Āsānī – Taysīr al-Islāh.

151. Maulwī Zafar Ahmad has prepared a simplified version of *Ilqā' as-Sakīnah*. It is titled *al-Husūn al-Hasīnah*.

152. Maulwī 'Abd al-Karīm Sāhib translated the Qur'ānic verses and Ahādīth of *Khutubāt al-Ahkām* into Urdu. It is titled *Ifādah al-'Awām*.

153. The said Maulānā also prepared a simplified version of the prelude to *Hayāt al-Muslimīn.*

154. 'Alī Muhammad Sāhib of Lahore selected certain themes from various *Mawā'iz* and *Malfūzāt* and named the collection *Ashraf al-Ma'mūlāt*.

155. Acting under the request of Mujtabā'ī Printers, Maulwī Jamīl Ahmad is preparing a simplified version of *Bayān al-Qur'ān*. The said Maulānā is also translating my book, *Lāmi' 'Alāmāt al-Auliyā'*. However, since this is being done under my request, it is not listed separately in this list.

156. Muhammad Hanīf of Sindh sought permission to translate and publish *A'māl Qur'ānī* into Sindhī. Permission was granted provided the 'amalīyyat which are harmful to the masses are excluded.

157. Hamīd Ahmad Sāhib of Hyderabad has expressed his intention to print *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* in Urdu and other local languages.

158. 'Abdullāh Khān Sāhib of Bhopal has expressed his intention of printing the simplified version of *Nashr at-Tīb.*

159. Hāshīm ibn Yūsuf wrote from Rānder stating that he seeks permission to publish themes from *Tas-hīl al-Mawā'iz* in a Gujarati periodical called *'Ilm.*

160-166. 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib of Salhat district wrote: I selected the themes which I considered appealing and beneficial from your writings, compiled them in the form of books and also gave separate titles to each. Almost 20 books have been compiled in this way. For example: (a) Muntakhab an-Nafā'is. (b) Majālis as-Sālihīn. (c) Hidāyah as-Sālik. (d)

Tarbīyyah at-Tālib. (e) Nukāt Darr Hull Shubuhāt Wa Qalbī Wāridāt. (f) Majmuʿah Hikāyāt. (g) Majmūʿah Ashʿār.

167-170. I received a letter from Maulwī Shams al-Haq Farīdpūrī stating: I have completed the Bangla translation of (a) Qasd as-Sabīl. (b) Furūʿ al-Īmān. (c) Safāʾī Muʿāmalāt. And (d) Taʿlīm ad-Dīn is almost complete.

(171-178). Maulwī Zafar Ahmad from Rangoon has informed me that: (a) The translation of Bahishtī Thamar in Burmese has been completed. (b) Hayāt al-Muslimīn has been translated into Burmese and its English translation is under way. (c) Tas-hīl Nashr at-Tīb will be translated into Burmese. The following are also under consideration: (d) Huqūq al-Islām. (e) Furūʿ al-Īmān. (f) Jazāʾ al-Aʿmāl. (g) Aghlāt al-ʿAwām. (h) Ādāb al-Muʿāsharat.

179. A few interested persons compiled a list of the *Mawāʾiz*. It has been titled *Mirʾat al-Mawāʾiz*.

180. Āftāb ad-Dīn, the owner of Muslim Library in Dhaka, Bengal wrote to me stating that he is most desirous of translating and publishing all six parts of Aʿmāl Qurʾānī. He seeks permission to do this. Permission was given to him.

181-193. Shihāb ad-Dīn of Delhi has prepared a contents for the following books: (a) Masāʾil as-Sulūk. (b) Takashshuf part one. (c) Takashshuf part two. (d) Masāʾil Mathnawī. (e) al-Futūh. (f)ʿIrfān Hāfiz. (g) A few themes from Fatāwā Ashrafīyyah. (h) Takashshuf part three from d-h. (i) Taʾyīd al-Haqīqah. (j) Taʿlīm ad-Dīn. (k) Furūʿ al-Īmān. (l)Qasd as-Sabīl-new edition. (m) at-Tasharruf. Together with this, he prepared lists of books written by other scholars. These are brief contents. Another list of contents for Masāʾil as-Sulūk, Takashshuf and Tasharruf which is titled ʿUnwānāt at-Tasawwuf has been prepared by Maulwī Jamīl Ahmad of ʿAlīgarh. Since it was done under my request, it has not been included in the current list.

194. Anfās ʿĪsā which contains extracts from Tarbīyyat [as-Sālik] and Mawāʾiz.

195. Ashʿār Hikmat, i.e. poetry from the Mawāʾiz. These last two (194&195) have been prepared by Maulwī Muhammad ʿĪsā.

196. References for the Ahādīth of Hayāt al-Muslimīn prepared by Maulwī Diyā' Ahmad Sāhib, former muftī of Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

197. Muhammad Karam, a teacher at Ashraf al-ʿUlūm Dhaka sought permission to translate my translation of the Qur'ān into Bangla. I gave him permission with specific suggestions.

198. ʿĀlimau kī Darūrat – this is a simplified version of the lecture Darūrah al-ʿUlamā'.

199. Najāt kā Tarīqah – simplified version of Tarīq an-Najāt.

200. Nafs kī Bhūl – simplified version of Nisyān an-Nafs.

201. Muhabbat ke Āthār – simplified version of Āthār al-Mahabbah.

202. ʿUlamā' kū ʿAmal kī Darūrat – simplified version of al-ʿAmal li al-ʿUlamā'.

203. Khūsh Tadbīrī – simplified version of Ihsān at-Tadbīr.

204. Mahmūd Qāsim of Tadkeshwar district Surat has been publishing my Mawā'iz since quite some time in Gujarati on a monthly basis.

205. Munshī Ismāʿīl Muhammad of Tankārah, Bharūch, who is the head Munshī of Urdu in the government school translated Islāh ar-Rusūm, Taʿlīm ad-Dīn, etc. into Gujarati, gave it to Majlis Khuddām al-Muslimīn who then printed these books and distributed them in Gujarat.

206. Acting under the counsel of Maulwī Shams al-Haq Sāhib, Muhammad ʿAbd as-Salām of Madrasah Ashraf al-ʿUlūm in Dhaka is translating my Mawā'iz in the Bangla language and publishing them in the monthly periodical of Madrasah Ashraf al-ʿUlūm. He also intends translating Bahishtī Zewar, Bahishtī Gauhar, Tablīgh Dīn and other books into the Bangla language.

207. ʿĪsā Ibrāhīm of Bharūch, Gujarat, translated Aghlāt al-ʿAwām and Islāh ar-Rusūm into Gujarati and gave it to Majlis Khuddām al-Muslimīn in Tadkeshwar who published and printed it. He also wrote that Taʿlīm ad-Dīn has been translated, the proof reading is close to completion and will be sent to the said Majlis for publishing.

208. Hakīm Maulwī Ilāhī Bakhsh of Sindh extracted the Ahādīth, verses and rulings from Bahishtī Zewar and compiled a book on Qurbānī in the Sindhī language. He named it *ar-Risālah al-Ashrafīyyah fī Taudīh al-Ud-hiyah*. A bookseller is having it printed.

209. Maqbūl Ahmad of Bengal sought permission to translate Qasd as-Sabīl in the Bangla language.

210. Fasād kī Bandish is a simplified version of the lecture al-Insidād li al-Fasād. (Note: The simplified version was prepared here in the Khānqāh under the request of Hājī Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib Marhūm Rangoonī. The manuscript was sent to him. It is probably with his heirs now).

211. ʿIlm wa ʿAmal kī Fadīlat is a simplified version of the lecture Fadl al-ʿIlm wa al-ʿAmal. (Note: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the tas-hīl (simplified version) of parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the series Daʿwāt has been completed. The tas-hīl of part 5 is on the verge of completion – eight of its ten lectures have been completed. The present lecture, Fadl al-ʿIlm wa al-ʿAmal, is the eighth lecture. At present, the tas-hīl series are being published by Muhammad ʿUthmān Khān, a bookseller in Delhi, in his periodical, *al-Hādī.*

Addendum:

The above was a list of works done by other scholars with changes, simplifications, translations and so on. The following is a list of attention shown to my works without any changes to them.

1. Mazhar Ahmad who is mentioned in the above list under number 113 has informed me that he has commenced teaching *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* together with *ʿAqīdah Hasanah* in his madrasah.

2. The manager of the Islamic Reunion in England ordered a few copies of Philosophy of Islam part 1 (which contains an English translation of two different themes written by myself) from Master Qubūl Ahmad. He promised that he will include the name of this book in his booklist which he publishes and sells. Bashīr Muslim Library of the same place sent money to Master Sāhib for a copy of Philosophy of Islam part one. He also expressed his interest in part two and promised to convey

these books to people who will be able to appreciate them in the true sense of the word.

3. The English translation of the lecture Nafy al-H̲araj makes up the second part of Philosophy of Islam, while the English translation of al-Ittifāq comprises its third part. Parts two and three were sent to the above-mentioned place. A letter of appreciation was received which Master S̲āh̲ib informed me about.

4. Taʿlīm ad-Dīn and Jamāl al-Qur'ān have been included in the syllabus of the primary classes at Maẕāhir al-ʿUlūm.

5. Maulwī Abū Bakr Arkānī who is also a mujāz (khalīfah) has included the following books in his Khānqāh syllabus: Taʿlīm ad-Dīn, Bahishtī Zewar, Qas̲d as-Sabīl, Is̲lāh̲ ar-Rusūm, Daʿwāt ʿAbdīyyat and an-Nūr. He also consulted with me on including a few other books and I gave him my advice in this regard.

6. Maulwī Khayr Muh̲ammad S̲āh̲ib, the rector at the madrasah in Jālandhar has informed me that from the Talkhīs̲āt ʿAshar, he selected Talkhīs̲ al-Bidāyah and ʿAsharah T̲arūs and made them compulsory texts of study in the intermediate years. He found them immensely beneficial. All praise is due to Allāh. All praise is due to Allāh.

CONCLUSION

> All thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that whatever the heart was demanding was manifested behind the veil of predestination.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* alone that through Allāh's grace and kindness and Hadrat Wālā's duʿā' and focus, *Ashraf as-Sawāniḥ* has been compiled at the hands of a most worthless person, and such a mammoth task was taken from one who is not even equal to an iota. By Allāh, when I look at my terrible condition and incompetence, and the importance and greatness of this task, I am left astounded. An explanation to this astonishing event – that such an important Dīnī service has been taken from such a useless, worthless and sinful person like myself – can be nothing but the following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

إن الله ليؤيد هذا الدين بالرجل الفاجر (وهذا الفاجر يقابل البر لا المسلم كما في قوله عليه السلام والصلوة واجبة عليكم خلف كل مسلم برا كان أو فاجرا، وإن عمل الكبائر، لأبي داؤد كذا في جمع الفوائد).

Allāh taʿālā *certainly helps this Dīn through a sinful person. (the word sinful is used in comparison to a righteous person, and not to a Muslim, as is made clear from the following words of Rasūlullāh* sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: "Salāh is obligatory on you behind every Muslim, whether he is righteous or sinful, and even if he commits major sins."*

Fear And Hope

I can honestly say that based on my bad condition and evil deeds, that in the course of writing this biography, I constantly feared and still fear that the misfortune of my actions and contradiction between my words and actions – Allāh forbid – must not affect the benefit and acceptance of this work, and must not cause a defect in it. However, O Allāh! You have the power and – Allāh willing - I have hope in Your mercy and generosity – I make duʿā' with absolute humility and submission that You would overpower my misfortune through the blessings of the one in whose name this biography is written [i.e. Hadrat Wālā]. That You will overpower it to such an

extent that the misfortune is changed into fortune, and cause it to disappear from within myself. And that this blessed compilation is not only beneficial to others, but that You rectify me through its blessings and endow me with the eternal treasure of honesty and sincerity. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh. May Allāh shower His mercy on the one who says Āmīn.

O Allāh! O Allāh!

O Allāh! You have power over everything. Through the intercession of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and by virtue of Hadrat Wālā, rectify my evil deeds and terrible condition, and change the evils of my self into virtues. Confer me with sound beliefs, excellent deeds and a good death.

Observation Of Unseen Help

Embellishing of this type can only be done by You, O Allāh! Changes of this nature are solely from Your mysteries.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, I witnessed such open and obvious unseen help in the course of writing this biography that I had no doubt whatsoever that it was Allāh's will to have Hadrat Wālā's life conditions and blessed statements recorded, and serve as a lesson for the ummah not for just centuries to come but to continue until the day of Resurrection. I felt as if my neck was being held by the unseen and I was forced to write. Had this not been the case, a disorganized, lackadaisical, of evil deeds and conditions, unanimously accepted as being devoid of knowledge and intellect person like me could never have accomplished a continuous and important task of this nature.

Unlimited praises are due solely to Allāh *taʿālā*. When I commenced with this work, I never imagined it would reach its present voluminous size. I merely started writing and thought to myself that I will write a short biography and be over with the job. I did not know that once I start speaking of my beloved I would become so intoxicated in recalling him that I would become a manifestation of the following couplet:

> O Allāh! What a unique fountain love is! I drank just one drop from it and I feel satiated as if I drank an entire ocean of water.

I did not realize that this will become my occupation for the rest of my life. Allāh willing, it is my intention to continue adding to this biography under the title, Miscellaneous Aspects of The Biography, as I had alluded to in the prelude to this chapter. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to bless me with honesty and sincerity, to make this task easy and beneficial for me, and to confer a very long life to the blessings of Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

Hadrat Wālā's View

Hadrat Wālā was extremely terrified. In fact, in the beginning there was no end to his abhorrence of this biography. I witnessed this daily when I used to present the manuscripts to him for editing. However, when in compliance with his severe warnings, I confined myself to noting only those aspects of his life which were admonitory and comprised of teachings; then bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā – by Allāh's will – is a high ranking personality and is not subject to his conditions, he overwhelmed his natural aversion [to the writing of this biography] with rational benefit and advantage out of consideration to the benefit of others. Consequently, on several occasions he said to me in a very remorseful tone: "By Allāh, I am extremely fearful that all this does not go in vain due to making it known. What can I do? This is why I have tolerated expressing my condition and absence of self-respect on the possibility that someone will derive benefit from it and will convince his mind to understand by reading the following couplet of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh*:

> When you drink alcohol, then cast a gulp of it onto the ground. What wrong is there in that sin from which others benefit?

As for my relationship with Allāh *taʿālā*, all I can say is: O Allāh! Forgive me. O Allāh! Forgive me if there is any defect in my intention.

I had heard the following statement from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*:

رياء الشيخ خير من إخلاص المريد

The ostentation of the shaykh is better than the sincerity of the murīd.

The reason for this is the same, viz. the murīd's sincerity benefits him alone and he alone becomes a sincere person. On the other hand, many people become sincere through the linguistic ostentation of the shaykh. I am not quoting this statement as proof for what I am saying because then it would mean that I am claiming to be a shaykh."

Hadrat Wālā also said on another occasion: "In the beginning I had no interest whatsoever in this book. In fact, I intensely abhorred it. I felt so ashamed that there were times when I felt like burning all the manuscripts. However, after observing the benefit of the manner in which it is being compiled, I developed a bond with it. This is similar to some free thinking people who recoil from merely thinking of having children. But after they get children, they develop a love for them."

The Need For This Biography

In the presence of Hadrat Wālā's written works and published statements and lectures, there was absolutely no need for this biography because every type of his condition and every kind of teaching – which are the fundamental themes of this biography – have been mentioned before. However, these are scattered and every person does not have so much of time and courage to study all his books, and it is also difficult to remember certain useful themes in the course of studying them. There was a need for this collection bearing in mind the ease of the seekers.

Although this collection has taken on a lunatic form due to my own natural incompetence and crazy temperament, it is more well organized than other collections.

An Excuse And An Apology

Based on my unworthiness, I take an oath in Allāh's name and say that in the course of this compilation I constantly felt remorse and still feel it that the author of a blessed book like *Ashraf as-Sawānih* should have been an extremely righteous and sanctified scholar and man of piety. However, what could we do, other personalities were too occupied. Nevertheless, I humbly appeal with utmost respect to the scholars that if it is possible for them, then they must compile the conditions, incidents and statements which I compiled in a colloquial manner in an academic style.

There is no need for them to make any changes to the subject matter itself because its authenticity is established and confirmed after the editing and necessary alterations which were made by the one on whom this biography is written [i.e. by Hadrat Wālā himself]. I feel it essential to state this fact to the respected reader that I have not acquired any knowledge nor did I undertake any special study of Urdu books except for Hadrat Wālā's writings which – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – Allāh *taʿālā* conferred me with the enthusiasm to study from the very beginning. Whatever little affinity I developed in presenting Hadrat Wālā's sciences and knowledge in my own broken and incomplete words is present before you as an example. This is solely due to my excessive study of his books, repeated listening to his statements, and the fruit of an extended stay in his blessed company. Hadrat ʿĀrif Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* says:

> What is so surprising about my being the first person to sit in the court of the ghazal? After all, I have spent several years in the service of the ghazal composer.

He also says:

> The beauty of my companion has had an effect on me. Apart from this, I am the same dust which I am.

May Allāh *taʿālā* turn these words of mine into my condition, may He subdue my rebellious self and make me a complete manifestation of the following words of Hadrat Rūmī *rahimahullāh*:

> Cast aside your words. Become a man of action. Obliterate yourself before a man who has reached perfection.

Allāh's Grace

In short, such a great honour of compiling *Ashraf as-Sawānih* has been acquired by a useless and worthless person like myself solely out of Allāh's grace and kindness. It is far beyond my position and outside of my academic capability. All this is just a ray and a shade from the spiritual and external sun of Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> O my Allāh! You are matchless and unique. How many secrets You concealed in the chest.

> You made the chest a treasure-chest of secrets and mysteries. You made it a treasure of pearls.
>
> You made it such that a chest must be attached to another chest, like a mirror which is bound to a mirror.
>
> O most high Allāh! You displayed the reflection of this mirror in others through Your intricate creation.

Hadrat ʿĀrif Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* writes:

> I am placed like a nightingale behind the mirror. I only say what my eternal teacher has been saying.

Since I am an ordinary person, as stated previously, I request the reader to pardon my excesses in my compositions. Apart from this, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am fully satisfied with whatever has been written because there are very few and rare instances where I did not read to Hadrat Wālā and then convinced myself. Anyway, the few and rare instances were left out without being checked by Hadrat Wālā after he made corrections to them and I personally changed the wording slightly, and later on – due to forgetting about it or not getting an opportunity – could not present it to Hadrat Wālā for re-checking.

The purpose of saying this is that if the reader comes across any transgressions of this nature, he must attribute it to me and inform me of them so that after consulting with Hadrat Wālā, if there is a need to make corrections, these will be made in the next edition.

After all these detailed presentations in prose, I present a few rhymed compilations of the elders and conclude my work at present.

The Concluding Couplets Of Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān

من خاتمة تفسير بيان القرآن:

سعيت إلى أن جدت بالجهد كله – ولكن ما سعي وجهدي وطاقتي

I did my utmost to put in all my efforts. But my striving, endeavour and power are nothing.

فإن كان فيه ما يسر واذ لرجا – فمن محض فضل الله لا من حذاقتي

If there is any good and hopeful thing in it, it is solely by Allāh's grace and not due to my expertise.

وإن كان من عيب ولست أقول لا – يكون فمني والجحود حماقتي

If there is any defect in it – and I do not deny any defect in it – then it is from me. It will be foolish of me to deny the presence of any defect in it.

فلا تنس يا ناظراه إن شفا صدو – ركم من دعاء الخير فعل صداقتي

O you who are reading it! If it gives solace to your hearts, you must pray for my goodness with all your heart.

ولا تفضحونا إن وجدتم خطاءنا – فكيف وقد اتبعت في الجهد ناقتي

If you find any mistake, do not humiliate us. How can you humiliate me when I have tired my camel in my efforts [in writing this book]?

The Concluding Couplets Of The Mathnawī

> Focus your attention towards Allāh *taʿālā* and complete the book. Do not lose hope. Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows what is most correct.

ربنا فالحمد لك في كل حال – أنت معنى الستر في كل المقال

O our Sustainer! All praise is due to You in every condition. You alone are the hidden mystery in every affair.

أنت مقصودي إليك وجهتي – خالصا لله كانت نهمتي

You are my objective. My gaze is directed towards You. My burning desire is solely for Allāh.

يا محيط الكل يا كهف الورى – يا إله العرش يا رب الثرى

O the One who encompasses all! O the refuge of the creation! O the deity of the Throne! O the Sustainer of the ground.

كن أنيس القلب اختم لي بخير – أنت حسبي أنت كافي ليس غير

Be the comforter of my heart. Let my end be a good one. You alone are my reckoning. You alone suffices for me.

Final Word

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين. والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وخاتم النبيين، وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه أجمعين إلى يوم الدين. تم بحمد الله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات.

في الخانقاه الإمدادية الأشرفية بتهانه بهون، لخمس وعشرين من ذي الحجة ١٣٤٥، آخر جمعة.

Our final supplication is that all praise is due to Allāh alone, the Sustainer of the worlds. Salutations and peace to the Chief of the Messengers and Seal of the Prophets, and to his family, companions and followers until the day of Reckoning. Completed with the praises of Allāh through whose favour all good works end.

Khānqāh Imdādīyyah Ashrafīyyah, Thānah Bhawan.
25 Dhū al-Hijjah 1345 A.H., Friday

Appendix

Although this subject is not part of the biography, it is related to it and has therefore been given the title "Appendix". It comprises of three parts:

1. A talk delivered by Hadrat Wālā on the occasion of the completion of this biography. It is titled *Shukr as-Sawānih*.
2. Taking the advice of Hadrat Wālā with regard to a specific practice whose reality will be made clear when it is read.
3. A short biography of myself whose objective is to know the essential aspects of the author's life. And whose real objective is to request the du'ā' of those who are present in favour of the author as was requested for Hadrat Wālā himself. We also hope for the du'ā's of those who are absent.

The three parts are now presented in sequence.

Shukr as-Sawānih

This is a lecture which was written by Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Ashraf 'Alī Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* on the occasion of the completion of the book *Ashraf as-Sawānih* written by Khwājah 'Azīz al-Hasan Sāhib, (B.A. – Assistant Inspector Madāris, Lucknow) on the 10th of Dhū al-Hijjah 1354

A.H. It was read out with a few short explanations on the same day in an assembly.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا، من يهده الله فلا مضل له، ومن يضلله فلا هادي له، ونشهد أن لا إلٰه إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، ونشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله. فأعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم. قال الله تعالى حكاية عن دعاء إبراهيم عليه السلام: ﴿واجعل لي لسان صدق في الآخرين﴾.

The reason for this lecture

Let me explain the reason for this lecture before explaining the verse which I recited. A few associates collated some of my life conditions and statements – titled *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ* – so that those who study them, especially those who have a Dīnī bond with me, will derive academic and practical benefit from them. It is hoped that the benefit extends for a long time – the extent of which is known to Allāh *taʿālā* alone. This, notwithstanding the fact that my conditions and statements are not worthy of any benefit. Moreover, every type of academic and practical treasure is already to be found in the hands of the ummah. This does not necessitate any new treasure. However, at the same time, as per the Ḫadīth: "I treat My servant according to his expectations of Me", it is the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* that when there are noble thoughts about a person, and it is expected that benefit will be derived from his conditions and statements, then it becomes especially easy to benefit from him. Based on this expectation, I did not interfere with this action [of compiling *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*] of my associates. Although this action is against my bequest which I compiled and also against my temperament, I tolerated their sincere efforts on the basis of this expectation. A detailed account of the reasons, obstacles and removal of obstacles with regard to this biography are to be found at the beginning of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*.

The theme of the verse which was recited

At this point, I am informing [the public] of the completion of this book and providing a short explanation of the verse which was recited and which is related to this subject.

Allāh *taʿālā* relates the story of a duʿā' made by Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām*. A few other duʿā's are quoted before and after the present duʿā'. However, I intend focusing on the present verse because it is more suited to my objective. The translation of the duʿā' is that Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* is making a presentation before Allāh *taʿālā* and saying: "O Allāh! Make for me (for my benefit) a good name among the later generations."

"a good name" or the Urdu "*dhikr-e-khayr*" is the translation of *lisāna sidq* in the sense that the word *lisān* (tongue) refers to dhikr on the basis of applying the cause to the effect. The word *sidq* is in the meaning of *sādiq* (truthful) in the hyperbolic sense. The word *sādiq* is taken to mean *husn* (goodness), i.e. good or pious which I expressed as *khayr*. The words *husn* and *khayr* are close in meaning and this is the essence of "a good name". as per the explanation of Rāghib (Asfahānī) in *Mufradāt* [*al-Qur'ān*], every virtuous action – whether external or internal – is expressed by the word *sidq*. When it is used to describe an action, it is attributed (*mudāf*) to *sidq*. For example:

مقعد صدق، ان لهم قدم صدق، ادخلني مدخل صدق واخرجني مخرج صدق.

In the verse under discussion, the essence of the words *lisān sādiq* is: "O Allāh! Make me so righteous that if people after me praise me, their praise and remembrance of me is a true and genuine praise." This is the relationship between the linguistic and real meaning of *sādiq*, and the traditional meaning of *husn*. Based on this explanation, a reference is also made to a quest for these beautiful attributes which results in a correlation between the imitation and the imitated. In the words *lisāna sidq*, the described word is attributed to the adjective, as contained in another verse:

وجعلنا لهم لسان صدق عليًّا

The exact same construction is found in the above verse, but it has one additional adjective to the word *lisān*, viz. *ʿalīyyan*. Here the adjective is used as an adjective and not in the attributive sense.

The second verse informs us of the acceptance of Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām's* supplication. Together with Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām*, it includes his son, Is-hāq *ʿalayhis salām*, and his grandson, Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām*. The probable reason for not mentioning his other son, Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām*, is that he was

given to Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* before Is-h̲āq and Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhimas salām*. When latter people are mentioned, the previous people are automatically understood. Whereas when people are mentioned together, and others are to be mentioned individually after a short while, then it is not necessary to mention them together. Thirdly, mentioning Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* attracted the hearts of the Arabs, while the mention of Is-h̲āq *ʿalayhis salām* and Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām* attracted the hearts of the People of the Book. It is because of this that Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* is mentioned immediately after this. Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām* will be mentioned after him. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best the mysteries of His Book. Bearing in mind that the Qur'ān is to remain and be recited until the day of Resurrection, a person's good name to be mentioned in it ensures the person's continued remembrance.

Anyway, all these have been conferred with this bounty which is a proof of the acceptance of the supplication of Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* with the additional bonus of the inclusion of his children and progeny.

The continued good name of a person is a great bounty

We learn from the supplication of Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* that for a person's good name to be remembered by the latter peoples is a great bounty which ought to be sought after. Although the bounty appears to be related to this world – bearing in mind that offspring are given in this world – it is surrounded by other Dīnī supplications. The supplication before it is:

رَبِّ هَبْ لِيْ حُكْمًا وَّاَلْحِقْنِيْ بِالصَّالِحِيْنَ

O my Sustainer! Bestow on me wisdom and include me among the righteous.[1]

In this verse he asks for wisdom – i.e. the most perfect form of combining knowledge with practice – and the highest form of proximity with the righteous, i.e. to be included among the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. This supplication is before the one under discussion. As for the supplication which is made after it, it reads as follows:

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[1] Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā', 26: 83.

وَاجْعَلْنِيْ مِنْ وَّرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيْمِ

Make me of those who shall inherit the garden of bliss.[1]

Here he asks to be made an heir of Paradise. In other words, he must be made eligible for Paradise. These two supplications [the one before and the one after the supplication under discussion] are purely Dīnī supplications. Thus, we can say that the supplication for a good name among the latter peoples, to be surrounded by supplications which are purely Dīnī is a strong indication that the supplication under discussion is also a Dīnī supplication bearing in mind where the fruits of it will be borne [i.e. in the Hereafter]. The letter *lām* in the word *lī* makes a clear reference to this because the *lām* is for benefit, and for a person to have a good name among the latter generations who are intended in this verse cannot be for worldly benefit [but for Dīnī benefit].

Thus, the benefit is most certainly for Dīn, and it is for reward. In other words, those people must tread my way which would result in my receiving additional reward. This same theme is expressed by the word *āthār* in the following verse:

اِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوْا وَاٰثَارَهُمْ

It is We who give life to the dead and We record what they sent forward and the traces which they left behind.[2]

Furthermore, for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to recite the above verse in support of the Hadīth: "The one who initiates a good act shall receive its reward…"[3] is a clear proof that the meaning of "benefit" in the above verse is "reward".

A form of this bounty

In short, ones continued remembrance by the latter peoples is a great Dīnī bounty. Every type of bounty – provided there is no Sharʿī and rational obstacle – is desired, as stated by Allāh *taʿālā*:

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[1] Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā', 26: 85.
[2] Sūrah Yā Sīn, 36: 12.
[3] As stated in *ad-Durr al-Manthūr* of the authority of Abū Hātim.

He perfected His bounties upon you, both external and internal.[1]

A Dīnī bounty – especially with the above mentioned precondition – will be more desirable, and there are none of the above mentioned obstacles for the continuation of the bounty of one's good name among the latter peoples. Thus, it will be desirable without any reservation more so when this remembrance is factual [genuine] as mentioned previously from the explanation of Rāghib [Asfahānī] in *Mufradāt [al-Qur'ān].*

There are different ways of acquiring this bounty. One of them is to compile and publish the life conditions and statements of a person. By and large, this will be a means for the continued remembrance of the person for a long time, for supplications in his favour, for people to emulate those of his actions which are worthy of emulation, and the blessing of noble thoughts of Muslims in favour of a fellow Muslim as per the principle that Muslims are Allāh's witnesses on earth. This is expressed in another way:

لو أقسم على الله لأبره

If he [a true believer] were to take an oath in Allāh's name, He will absolve him of it.

أدار الحق معه حيث دار

The truth moves with him wherever he goes.

The removal of defect and completion of bestowals to the above person in this worldly life entails inspiring him to do good deeds; and the expiation of sins and elevation of ranks in the Hereafter. Based on all this, the one who strives to compile such a book and have it published will most certainly be the means for this collective bounty with all its subsidiaries.

Those who are means for the acquisition of the bounty

The means for this bounty have been provided to me via *Ashraf as-Sawāniḥ*. Thus, those who strove to compile and publish it are the means for this bounty for me. After thanking the Real Benefactor (Allāh – who is essentially and firstly eligible for all gratitude), I am ordered to thank the means for this bounty. A Hadīth states:

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[1] Sūrah Luqmān, 31: 20.

من لم يشكر الناس لم يشكر الله

The one who does not thank people has not been grateful to Allāh.

Du'ā' and praising the person is one of the methods of expressing thanks, as stated in the following Hadīth:

من صنع إليه معروف فقال لفاعله جزاك الله خيرا فقد أبلغ في الثناء

When good is done to a person and he says: "May Allāh reward you well" to the doer, he has praised him totally.

This is why I also make du'ā' for such persons in this assembly. This du'ā' also entails a praise as mentioned in the above Hadīth. I also request others to make du'ā' for them. Since the compilation of the book is the basis for its publication, in addition to making du'ā' for the compiler – which includes the publisher – I decided to give him a certificate in the form of a hat [topī]. I have also written an appropriate couplet on it with the year of completion.[1] I had also done this previously for a certain friend on the completion of one part of the commentary of the *Mathnawī*. Details in this regard are to be found in the lecture titled *Shukr al-Mathnawī*. Bearing in mind the resemblance of the present lecture with that one, I give the present lecture the title *Shukr as-Sawānih*.

Conclusion

I now conclude my talk and repeat my request to those who are present and to the readers for du'ā' for the compiler and for myself as well.

وصلى الله تعالى على خير خلقه محمد وآله وأصحابه أجمعين

Written in Thānah Bhawan on the last day of the days of tashrīq, and read on 25 Dhū al-Hijjah 1354 A.H. on a Friday.

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[1] This couplet is quoted towards the end of this chapter.

Advice Is Sought by Hadrat Wālā[1]

The subject of it is: "If specific conditions demand the giving up of training and rectification…I will consider giving it up to be permissible at that time." Eight months have passed since writing this article. During this period, certain incidents occurred which demand that I be inclined to this view, i.e. the practice of training and rectification be given up (in other words, strict adherence to training and rectification, taking people to task for not paying attention to their rectification either in totality or partially except in situations where I have full confidence.

The essence of this is that I must give up interfering in this regard, and that I must only serve people who personally want to be served provided the preconditions of service are complied with. Where I am not asked to serve a person, I will not interfere with him. Where the preconditions of service are not found, I will keep silent or apologize for my shortcoming. My reply will be like a reply to a question.

I received support for this approach of mine from one of my Pīr Bhāis, Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Sāhib Allāhābādī *rahimahullāh*, as related to me by one of his reliable attendants. This approach appealed to me because of the Dīnī advantages which it has. This is the crux of my opinion. I now seek the advice of my associates. If there is any rational or traditional prohibition for it, they must inform me so that I can review my position. If not, I request the duʿā' for blessings and the usefulness of this approach.

Was salām
Thānah Bhawan, Dhū al-Hijjah 1354 A.H.

Majdhūb's humble plea

Presented to Hadrat [Wālā] – the physician of hearts – in reply to Hadrat Wālā's request for advice.

This fellow [the author, Hadrat Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib - is referring to himself] who neither has the intelligence nor the

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[1] The title of this article is: I seek advice with reference to the subject matter of the article *at-Tabdīl min at-Tathqīl ilā at-Taʿdīl* which was quoted from *Husn al-ʿAzīz* and made a part of *Ashraf as-Sawānih* – written by Hadrat Wālā.

traditional knowledge, is neither aware of any rational or traditional prohibition, nor is he qualified to give any advice. However, I make a humble plea at present and beg before Hadrat Wālā in the hope that it will be accepted. My plea is this: Hadrat Wālā must never disregard the wellbeing of genuine seekers solely because of a few people who are lacking in understanding – in fact, who do not possess correct understanding, who are short-sighted and have no knowledge of the consequences. Hadrat Wālā must certainly not change his present approach to training and rectification, and he must never think that there is no one who disvalues his present approach. Hadrat Wālā can be rest assured that there are many seekers who, no matter how naturally heavy Hadrat Wālā's approach may seem to them, they find it rationally most appealing and acceptable because of its many benefits which they have observed. They desire – with their heart and soul – that Hadrat Wālā never changes his approach, and that he maintains it exactly as it has been continuing for so long. I therefore request on their behalf and for myself as well, and quote with utmost sincerity and respect – in fact, with love – the following couplets of Hadrat Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh*:

> If you are taking away the comfort from our hearts and departing, then depart in a beautiful manner.
>
> Majdhūb's eyes and heart are with you so that you do not think that you are departing all alone.

If not, the remorse of those who are desirous of rectification will be as follows:

> O Ahsan! With what hope will I be able to survive when thoughts of wrong depart from even the heart of the beloved?

Majdhūb's advice

This is my advice to all seekers of rectification with reference to Hadrat Wālā's request for advice as quoted above.

I have presented my request and plea to Hadrat Wālā in response to his request for advice which was quoted above. Other seekers of rectification should also voice their opinions and make duʿā' that Allāh *taʿālā* keeps Hadrat Wālā firm on whatever decision he comes to.

Author's Biography[1]

Name and lineage

The name of this worthless, valueless and unknown person is ʿAzīz al-Hasan. My family people refer to themselves as Khwājah Ghaurī because one of our forefathers during the rule of King Humāyūn was Ilāh Dād ibn Khwājah Ghaurī. His name is inscribed on our local masjid as the founder of the masjid. It is from his name that our ancestral properties are known as Thūk Ilāh Dād. This name is to be found on the official title deeds of these properties. Moreover, the district which we live in is well-known as Ghaurī Pārah.

Family town and its history

Our town, Āsifābād, also known as Nad Baʾī, falls under the rule of Rājputānah in Bharat Pūr. According to the information which we obtained, this town has been inhabited since the days of Sultan Shihāb ad-Dīn Ghaurī, the conqueror of India.

I heard from a reliable member of my town that when Sultan Shihāb ad-Dīn Ghaurī conquered this section of Rājputānah, the soldiers and commanders who had accompanied him settled down in twelve different places of this region. These twelve places are inhabited by Muslims to this day. One of them is our hometown which comprises of several districts inhabited by different tribes. For example, Ghaurī Pārah, Qādī Pārah, Bhelam Pārah, Sayyid Pārah and so on because the army comprised of soldiers from several tribes. Bayānah is also one such town which holds a historical position where many major battles took place and many martyrs are buried.

Ancient documents make mention of our town by the name of Āsifābād. One of the graves is said to belong to Āsif ad-Daulah, the founder of the town. It is also said that a Shīʿah ruler conquered this region in three hours. This is why it is known as Pahar Sar.[2] All the inhabitants of this area became Shīʿahs with whom we had family ties, but these have terminated now.

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[1] As per Hadrat Wālā's instruction, I present a short and concise biography about myself. (compiler-Hadrat Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*)

[2] "pahar" means three hours, and "sar" means to conquer. Pahar Sar will therefore refer to a place which was conquered in three hours.

The people of that place inhabited Āgrah, in the Shāh Ganj Mahallah, and achieved so much of worldly progress that thousands of them became barristers, authors, judges, deputy collectors, commissioners and so on. Many of them are present to this day.

Historical vestiges of the town

The fact that our town is a very ancient town is also obvious from the fact that the graves, masājid and water-wells have inscriptions from the eras of Bābur, Humāyūn, Akbar, Aurangzeb and other kings of the past. My deceased brother collated all this information and had it published. Moreover, our extended family members which include magistrates, Chaudrīs[1] and Patels,[2] have many ancient royal edicts and documents in their possession. I recall seeing the following inscription on a grave which I saw a very long time ago: "Shahīd Shadar Kālinjar". Some other name was also inscribed before these words, but I cannot recall it at present. It was most probably "Ibrāhīm". The words "Ghaurī" and "Haft Hazārī" were inscribed at the end of this name. One grave in our graveyard had the words "Khūnd Miyā Khwāj" inscribed on it. Our town also has an old mausoleum which is well known as Khwājnī Pīr. It is said that the person who is buried there was a pious elder by the name of Khwājah Nūh. In short, this town is an old inhabitancy of noble people which was highly populous at some time in the past. It is now deserted because most of the people left it for Jhālrā Pātan in search for greener pastures. Jhālrā Pātan is filled with people from Nad Ba'ī (Āsifābād).

My hometown

I had very little contact with my birthplace and hometown because my father, Maulwī Khwājah 'Azīzullāh Sāhib Marhūm, had settled down in Aura'ī, district Jālūn because he was a lawyer there. I was born here (Aura'ī) and it has become our second hometown, although our relationships with the people of our original hometown still continue.

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[1] A Chaudrī is a title for a land-holder.
[2] The headman of a village is given the title, Patel.

My father

My respected father was one of two most respected lawyers of Auraʾī. The other was a Hindu. In most cases, if one party was to appoint one of them as its lawyer, the other party would most certainly appoint the other one. My father never accepted weak and false cases. He used to work very hard in preparation for his court cases. I personally saw him lying down and studying case records. He would repeatedly place the records on his chest, and repeat from memory the incidents and matters which are to be discussed. He was well-known for his integrity and hard work which caused his practice to glitter. He was so attached to our extended family that he would have lunch and supper cooked for fifty people at a time. A very weighty copper trough and large pots from those days are still to be found [in our family home]. In line with his concern for his family, he ensured that no one got into the habit of relying on others and doing no work.

If any family member asked him for a loan and he did not expect it to be repaid because of the person's poverty, then instead of giving him a loan, he would give him as much money as he could and say: "Do not worry about paying it back." He would explain to us by saying:

القرض مقراض المحبة

The giving and accepting of loans are strong causes of ill-feeling between both parties.

Firmness in religious matters

My father had to interact with people belonging to all religions and creeds because of his law practice. He had special relations with some public servants. However, when it came to religious matters, he never did anything against his religion for their sake nor did he ever attend their religious gatherings. He had deep interactions with certain Shīʿah public servants, but he never participated in their assemblies of mourning. He would clearly say to them that personal relations have to be separated from religious matters. During those days, there used to be certain gatherings of music and merrymaking. In addition to the men of authority in the town, the collector and others holding senior posts used to attend. On such occasions, my father would go to welcome them before they can reach the

venue. He would then leave and sit in a far away place where the sound of the music does not fall in his ears. When the function was over, he would go back to bid farewell to the seniors.

Independence in living

He was very firm on his appearance and principles and upheld them throughout his life. He would always perform his salāh on a particular spot in the Jāmi' Masjid so much so that people would keep that place for him. He would always perform the tarāwīh salāh in the Jāmi' Masjid and make arrangements to feed rice and a sweet dish to those who were spending the night of Qadr in the masjid. Similarly, his original style of clothing which he chose for himself was maintained for the rest of his life – he never changed his style. If he established a special bond with a person, he maintained it for the rest of his life. When my deceased brother had a heated dispute with one of my father's old friends, my father said to him: "In the first place, I do not make friends with anyone. However, when I do befriend a person, then I uphold it forever. I am not like you people who make friends today and become enemies tomorrow."

Preserving his children's character

My father was so concerned about our character that he would not permit us to go to school on our own. Instead, he would send us with one of his workers. He would then send the worker to escort us back after school. He strictly emphasized on us not to go to school via the bazaar road; we must take another route. Based on this old habit of mine, I still hesitate in going through the bazaar road.

Abstaining from obscenities

My father had absolutely no inclination towards obscenities. He said to me on one occasion: "I do not know why you people are so interested in play and amusement. I went to a theatre just once in my life because it was a totally new thing to us and because people were speaking so much about it. After going on that one occasion, I never felt the urge to go again because I realized that there is no benefit whatsoever in looking at it again and again."

Planning and reflection

Whatever task my father did, he did with total ease, after thinking and pondering over it carefully, and after taking advice from others. He did all this despite everyone else being junior to him. He used to say: “It is Sunnah to seek advice.”

Attention to purdah

No matter how strong his bond with non-relatives and in spite of their insistence, my father would never allow the womenfolk of his house to go to their [non-relatives] house. In fact, he was so cautious in this regard that he would instruct the water-carrier, toilet-cleaner and millstone grinder women to observe purdah. No one was permitted to enter the house without first announcing his or her arrival and ensuring that everyone inside was in purdah. Only the cook and wet-nurse were excused.

When Deputy Maulwī Karīm Bakhsh S̲āh̲ib insisted [on my father to bring the womenfolk to his house], my father excused himself by saying: “The women in our house have very little jewellery and will feel embarrassed when they meet the women of your house.” The Deputy S̲āh̲ib passed a judgement in my father’s favour for a major case. Consequently, my father received a large amount of money from his client. The Deputy S̲āh̲ib then said to him: “Look, you can now get some jewellery made and bring your womenfolk to meet the women of my house.” My father still did not agree to it.

Protecting his lineage

My father did not enter into any marriage ties with anyone outside our extended family. Some very senior and respectable people expressed their interest but my father replied: “No matter how noble a woman we bring from outside, the women in our homes will consider her to be beneath them and she will unnecessarily feel humiliated.” He was so particular about safeguarding the lineage that he had clearly warned us against establishing marriage ties with certain families.

Patience and forbearance

My father was extremely resolute and unwavering, and would not be overcome by the worst of accidents and the most joyous of occasions. In both instances – whether sad or happy – he would utter just one word: “Khayr (okay).” However his tone

would be different for each situation. All this notwithstanding the fact that he was extremely sensitive. He would be very much affected by both situations. The effect which they had on him would be discerned through certain responses. For example, his eyes would well with tears on both occasions of sorrow and joy. I clearly remember when my eldest sister passed away. He was dictating a letter to me which was being addressed to my uncle. My father would pause for long periods of time after each sentence which he dictated because his heart was filling with emotions of grief and he was doing his utmost to suppress them.

Observing the rights of neighbours

My father was most concerned about the rights of his neighbours. We were living in a Hindu residential area and our house was the only Muslim house. He had strictly emphasised on his workers to never bring meat while it was exposed. He also instructed the women at home to bury the bones under the ash lest a crow picks up a bone and drops it in a neighbour's yard, thereby offending the neighbour. His consideration of his neighbours made such an impression on them that although they were Hindus, when they saw him walking pass, they would move their huqqah pipes aside and stand up out of respect for him.

Modesty

My father was extremely bashful. He would never expose the area beneath his kurtah before anyone. When he was on his death bed, it was extremely difficult for him to go to the toilet by himself. My mother would want to be with him so that she could assist him but he would never allow her to be with him at the time of relieving himself. He would move her aside.

Intelligence and prudence

My father was extremely intelligent and wise. When he had to beat any of us as a way of disciplining us, he would take us inside the house in front of our mother and then beat us so that he – in his anger – does not beat us more than necessary and our mother would be there to save us. On one occasion he beat my younger brother for not performing salāh and said: "It is stated in a Hadīth that if a child does not perform salāh even after reaching the age of ten, the child may be beaten." When we were students he would constantly emphasize on us to

study. However, he never gave preference to our studies over our health. He used to say to me: "One must not study so much that it affects his health." He related to me the condition of one judge who was always weak and ill. He said: "Of what use is a high position when one has destroyed his health in the process of acquiring that position?"

Determination and soft-heartedness

My father was so unwavering that when I was appointed as an inspector for water works while in ʿAlīgarh and went to Shāhjahānpūr to learn this job, he wrote to me saying: "I did not make you study B.A. to get this job. Leave the job immediately and come back." I returned home and made efforts to get a job as a deputy collector. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and Hadrat Wālā's prayers, I got the job. Although my father was a mountain of independence, he was extremely soft-hearted. I recall how he used to read an Arabic supplication which is composed in rhymed verses and attributed to Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He would be overcome by emotion and start crying, but would also keep himself in check.

Spiritual bond

My father had pledged bayʿah to Hadrat Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* via correspondence, and, as per Hadrat Hājī Sāhib's instruction, received his spiritual training from Hadrat Wālā.

Bravery

My father was extremely brave and courageous. One of my cousins went to a police training school and was sent to study to become a sub-inspector. He wrote to my father: "The horse-riding training over here is extremely difficult. One of my fellow students fell off a horse and died. This has really frightened and terrified me." My father dictated an extremely encouraging letter which was sent to him. He wrote: "I am very disappointed by your lack of courage. We are Ghaurīs; our forefathers conquered India. Horsemanship has been the occupation of our forefathers. I am most disappointed over your fear of riding horses. This is extremely cowardly."

My father was travelling from Lalatpūr to our hometown. He was on his horse and had his sword with him. On the way, he saw a lion. He felt it would be difficult to defend his life so he

stopped his horse. He unsheathed his sword and thought to himself: “I am to die any way. I will not die without putting up a fight.” By luck of coincidence, the lion’s attention was diverted, it turned away and continued.

He used to relate a story to us when we were children. A lion approached a small town. This incident most probably occurred in Lalatpūr. People were thinking of ways to kill it. I also reached there with my gun. We were always in the habit of mimicking the roaring of a lion as a way of entertaining people. We used to mimic its roaring in such a terrifying way that we ourselves would get terrified. In addition to entertaining people with stories of this nature, we used to relate them in order to create bravery and courage in them.

Dignity and awe

My father was very dignified, awe-inspiring and strong. A huge utensil of milk used to be delivered to our house daily. It was my father’s habit to drink this milk daily. When he passed away and was laid down to be bathed, one of my relatives remarked: “It looks like a huge weighty army general is lying down here.” When a doctor admired and praised my father for his good health despite his old age, he said: “My father was a very religious man. This is why we have always been leading a religious life, and this is why our health is good.”

My grandfather

Those who were especially religious in our family were referred to as Mullājī. My grandfather was also addressed as Mullājī. In fact, he was a distinguished Mullā among the other Mullās. He used to treat people and prescribe medicines for them. He used to go frequently to the houses of tanners to treat them. Previously he was a soldier in the army. My father had learnt to shoot with a gun and to load a cannon from him. Subsequently, my father taught us how to load a cannon and how to shoot with a gun. It was my grandfather who initiated the practice of teaching girls how to read the Qur’ān. This practice was not prevalent before this in our town.

Knowledge and practice

My father would always practise on whatever he learnt. He would periodically quote the statements of the pious elders to us. On one occasion he quoted a saying of Hadrat Sa‘dī

rahimahullāh. On another occasion I drank water after eating watermelon, so he quoted the following statement from a medical book:

الماء على الفواكه ردي، وعلى البطيخ أردى

Drinking water after eating fruit is bad, and is far worse after eating watermelon.

Similarly, he prohibited us from drinking too much of water after a meal and explained the reason as follows: There are finger-like projections in the stomach which attach themselves to food, break it down and absorb it. If a person drinks too much of water, the food floats [in the stomach] and does not attach itself to those projections of the stomach. This results in indigestion.

Final illness

When my father's breathing faltered during his final illness, he called for all his relatives and – as was his habit – consulted with them with regard to the course of treatment. He said to them: "Although I do not know what I still have to do in this world, by Allāh's grace I have done everything. However, since it is Sunnah and I am also suffering, I feel we should consult and decide on a formal treatment which I should follow." My father had fallen unconscious once during his illness. However, bearing in mind that he had studied medicine as well, the moment he regained consciousness, he said: "If I fall unconscious again, you must do the following things…" For example, one of the things which he asked us to do was to lift him up by holding him by his hair and to sprinkle cold water on his face. On one occasion he said to my mother while he was unconscious: "Look at that light where she is performing salāh. You too must perform your salāh." It may well be that the Hereafter was exposed to him during his final hours and the light which he saw was a doe-eyed damsel of Paradise. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.

Demise

My father passed away on 3rd or 4th Dhū al-Hijjah 1326 A.H. on a Sunday about 15-20 minutes after sunrise. He was 63 or 68 years old at the time. May Allāh *taʿālā* forgive him. Āmīn.

Respect and honour among rulers

Rulers and non-rulers – everyone – looked up to my father with respect. He was appointed as an official government lawyer and a vice-chairman of the board when it was always the norm to appoint a collector as the chairman. By Allāh's grace, it is due to my father's position that we ourselves are enjoying high positions. Whatever worldly progress we achieved was by virtue of my father. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, many among us held high positions and many still do. My one nephew was promoted as a collector and eventually retired as one. He is now the chief officer of a state where he earns a high salary, enjoys many powers and holds two titles. My deceased brother, Khwājah 'Azīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib, was a minister in a state. He was loved by all, highly respected, a man of high rank and many powers. Several other relatives are deputy collectors, judges, treasury officers and so on. I myself was initially appointed as a deputy collector through my father's efforts.

In short, my father was a high-ranking personality who was very respected, resolute, self-honoured, modest, principled, upright, steadfast, and an elder who had a lot of interest in the different branches of knowledge. No matter where he lived he was always a distinguished person from childhood until the end of his life.

Desire for knowledge

During his student days, the teacher had appointed my father as his deputy. The people of our hometown therefore referred to him as Khalīfah Jī right until the end of his life. He used to relate an incident which occurred during his student days: "I went with my classmates to Bharatpūr to observe a Dasehrah procession. I was so enthusiastic about my studies that I carried my books with me, and I was so immersed in studying them that the entire procession passed without my even realizing it." Similarly, when he was preparing for his law-board exams, he developed a boil on his thigh. It was extremely painful, so the worker continued pouring water over it throughout the night while my father was engrossed in his studies. The elders in our town relate that they found him to be very focussed since childhood. Other children would play

kabaddī[1] while he would keep guard over their clothes and shoes. He would watch them playing but would not join them.

Awe-inspiring nature

Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed him with immense awe. Although he was extremely kind and affectionate, he used to remain silent most of the time. He would continue engaging in dhikr while sitting or lying down, while everyone around him – young and old – would be overcome by awe of him. My teacher, Maulānā Hāfiz Hidāyatullāh Kīrānwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say: "When I used to see Wakīl Sāhib [my father] approaching, I would rather take a one-mile alternate route than have him to pass by me." He also used to say: "The moment I enter my house I can make out whether Wakīl Sāhib is present or not because the house has a completely different feeling when he is around." There were times when very senior deputy collectors and other similar personalities would be having a light-hearted conversation and joking among themselves, but the moment they come to know that my father is nearby, they would all fall silent with utmost respect. They would say to themselves: "Keep quiet, Maulwī Sāhib is approaching."

Even when the people of our residential area – despite being Hindus – were to see my father passing by while they were smoking their huqqahs, they would move the huqqahs aside and stand up out of respect for him. This was related previously. When my father's corpse was being carried away, the people said: "The light of our residential area is leaving us today."

Interest in studying and teaching

When he completed his studies in our hometown, he proceeded to Agra. While he was there, the people of ʿIllatpūr sent a request for a teacher. Although ʿIllatpūr was at quite a distance and there were no trains going there in those days, my father accepted to go due to his enthusiasm to teach. While there, he would only come home once in about 3-4 years because of the distance and the absence of trains. He possessed an ardent interest in most branches of knowledge and acquired them on his own. In addition to Arabic, he studied Sanskrit, medicine

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[1] A contact team sport which is popular in South Asia. It is a state sport in some of the states of India.

and a bit of English. He used to read the Hindi translation of Sūrah al-Fātiḫah in perfect Hindi to his clients. I personally heard him doing this.

Receiving his law degree

During the time when my father was a teacher, one of his student's father insisted: "Teach my son the law books because I want him to sit for the law exam." My father agreed although it was a completely new field to him. When the boy's father was sending the fees for his son's exams, he included fees in my father's name so that he too could write the exams. My father said to him: "I did not teach the books [to your son] with a view to writing the exams myself, how will I be able to pass." However, once the fees were paid in, my father started studying the books. Subsequently, both - the teacher and student – passed the exam. My father then started his law practice and was considered to be one of the best lawyers of the district. He was eventually appointed as a state lawyer.

Islamic studies

My father's interest in knowledge continued while he was a lawyer. He translated the books *Mīzān Munshaʿib, Panj Ganj* and *Naḫw Mīr* in a very useful Urdu style and had them published under the titles *ʿAzīz al-Mubtadī, ʿAzīz aṯ-Ṯālibīn* and *ʿAzīz an-Nuḫāt*. These books are printed by certain publishers to this day. I have heard that they are in wide use in Bengal. Special attention was paid to simplifying the rules by adopting tables and graphs.

When Janāb Maulānā Nūr Muḫammad S̱āḫib Fataḫpūrī *raḫimahullāh* who was a senior scholar and pious elder saw these books, he said with reference to my father: "I can gauge from these books that – Māshā Allāh – he was a very organized and highly intelligent person."

When my father got us to study English, he ensured we study Arabic as well so that the evil effects of English will be wiped out. He also taught my mother Arabic to the level that she could read the Qur'ān with understanding. He would also teach us the translation of the Qur'ān.

My father was well-known for his strict adherence to the type of dress which he adopted for himself, his principled lifestyle and his integrity. A few incidents in this regard were related

previously. I recall many other incidents but I am not quoting them here for the sake of brevity. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer him with the highest stages in Paradise. Āmīn.

Rank among the scholars

In both positions – as a teacher and as a lawyer – my father was always looked up to with high regard by senior scholars and people of high positions, especially Janāb Deputy Collector Maulwī Karīm Bakhsh Sāhib Marhūm. The latter was a distinguished scholar who had – with other scholarly leaders – translated the Indian Penal Code into Urdu.

Maulwī Nūr al-Hasan Sāhib Jhanjhālwī *rahimahullāh* who was a very close relative of Hadrat Miyājī Nūr Muhammad Sāhib Jhanjhālwī *rahimahullāh* and a pious personality himself used to pay a lot of attention to my father. So much so that when my father was transferred to any place, he would have himself transferred there as well. Due to his strong bond with my father, it was he who had named me after his own son's name. I consider this to be a major good fortune in my favour. He had also named some of my other brothers and sisters. When he was pensioned off, my father went to visit him in Jhanjhānah.

My own life

I beg the reader's pardon because instead of writing about myself, I started writing about my father. However, there is no such quality in me on which I can base my introduction about myself. As I had mentioned previously, I was initially appointed as a Deputy Collector. After serving in this position for seven years, I requested a transfer to the education department even though it meant receiving half my salary. I had to make decisions there, but a person who is fortunate will receive what is meant for him. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, through the duʿā's of Hadrat Wālā, I progressed in the education department until I reached the rank of Inspector. This is considered to be a very high position in this department. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, my present salary is 660 rupees with an annual increase of 30 rupees. In short, Allāh *taʿālā* is giving food to His donkeys as well. All this is through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā's duʿā's – as was explained in detail in a previous chapter of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. Some aspects of my life were described there, there is no need to repeat them here.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, by virtue of Hadrat Wālā's company and the blessing of my bond with him, I have always been fulfilling my work responsibilities with integrity and hard work. Consequently, to show their appreciation to me, the rulers interceded in my favour to the government to give me the title of "Khān Sāhib" without my requesting it. I also received a medal on the occasion of my crowning. Although I am most certainly not worthy of it, through Allāh's graces and the blessing of Hadrat Wālā's company, people generally look up to me with a lot of respect, admiration and love in both the worldly and Dīnī sense. This causes me a lot of embarrassment. A poet says:

> The peacock has its own beauty because of which people praise and admire it. But the peacock itself is ashamed of its ugly feet.

The manifestation of Hadrat Wālā's glad-tiding

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, I am seeing the materialization of Hadrat Wālā's glad-tiding which he had given me quite some time ago in reply to a letter which I had written to him. He had written: "Allāh willing, you will be conferred with rectitude and success in both worlds. My heart testifies to this." May Allāh *taʿālā* make true this glad-tiding of Hadrat Wālā in every way. May He bless me with every type of rectitude and goodness in this world, enable me to depart from this world with perfect īmān, and bless me with total success in the Hereafter. Āmīn. May Allāh shower mercy on the one who says Āmīn. At this point, I recall two couplets which I had composed at the time when I bought a motor car.

> I have a life, I have honour, I have a motor car. What else do I need in this world? O Allāh! It will be Your great favour if I also receive the bounties of that life.

Thousands and thousands of thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for having blessed me with a successful life in every aspect despite my worthlessness and insignificance. By Allāh, I am most dumbfounded and astonished by it. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire me to be grateful. Although I kept a beard and never wore a [western-style] trouser during my student days at ʿAlīgarh College, whenever I requested a certificate from any of my British or Hindu lecturers, they wrote: "He is an excellent example of a true student of ʿAlīgarh College." One of them

wrote: “No matter what position he is appointed to, he will reach its peak.”

The B.A. exam

I passed the B.A. exam on the third level because I was never interested in my studies. When the lecturer used to deliver his lessons, I used to remain seated with an empty mind. I would not hear a single word. Instead, I used to communicate with my fellow students in class by passing around notes to them. When the exams used to approach, I would work very hard by night and day, and – by Allāh’s grace – pass the exams. When my father came to know that I had not been studying at all, then in the last part of my B.A. he would sit near me [to ensure that I was studying]. But even when he was seated near me, I would pass the time in composing supplication-poetry while my father assumed that I was studying my books. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, my tasks were completed by virtue of these supplications. I received unseen help despite having lost all hope. I was successful by Allāh’s grace.

I had to write two papers for one particular subject. I did not even look at the text books for one of those papers, and there seemed to be no way that I would pass that paper. In fact, while making du‘ā’, I would experience the whispering – Allāh forbid – and think to myself: “Why would Allāh help me when I did not even look at the text books?” I decided that I will not even write this paper. May Allāh be kind to a sincere and religious class mate who forced me to write the paper. I went to write it with no hope at all. Look at Allāh’s power! It was either the examiner’s mistake or some other reason that questions were asked on a book which we were already tested on in the previous paper, and I happened to remember the answers. This never occurred in any previous exam. The moment my eyes fell on the paper, they opened wide and in my extreme gratitude, tears flowed from my eyes. I said: “O Allāh! You most certainly have power over everything. You can give a person success even when he has lost all hope.” By Allāh’s grace, I passed, although on the third level.

The post of deputy collector

During this period, people were sending applications for the post of tax-collector. I also sent my application but the prerequisite was that a person must have a minimum second

level pass. My application was therefore declined. Some of my relatives began scolding and reprimanding me and said that if I had worked a bit harder [in my exams], I would have got the post. I replied: "I was doubting whether I would even pass, where would I have ever been able to obtain a second level pass?" I added: "There must be some underlying reason known to Allāh *taʿālā* alone." I had written two couplets in this regard. Subsequently, this is what happened. My father went to the governor, Latosh S̲āh̲ib, with a request for me to be excluded from the rule [of having at least a second level pass]. The governor replied: "I am here to apply the rules, not to make exceptions. However, the precondition of a second level pass does not apply to the post of Deputy Collector. He can get that post, but not the post of tax-collector." My father then made efforts for the post of Deputy Collector and, by Allāh's grace, succeeded in this regard. Allāh's mysterious ways were demonstrated. When I was not passing the exams for the post of Deputy Collector because of my disinterest, the rules were changed on my last attempt. This was from the unseen help of Allāh *taʿālā*. The new rule was that an open-book test was permitted. I passed this test.

In short, on every occasion, Allāh *taʿālā* steered my worthless self from the very beginning and He is still steering and guiding me. In the same way, I got the job of inspector contrary to my expectations. May Allāh *taʿālā* continue helping my worthless self in this way in both worlds.

Allāh's special grace

Bearing in mind that I am a very lackadaisical and disorganized person, I found that Allāh *taʿālā* almost always ensured that my wife and children rarely fell sick. If they happened to fall extremely ill, they were with their maternal relatives or other relatives where they received excellent medical treatment and care. All I would hear about the incident is that someone fell extremely ill and – by Allāh's grace – has recovered. Look at how Allāh *taʿālā* makes concessions for His weak servants. As a poet says:

> There can be nothing better than this: From the very first day I commit sins and acts of disobedience while You show Your kindness and affection towards me.

I find my entire life – from the very beginning – to be a manifestation of this. I consider it to be nothing but a miracle from Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* set right the affairs of my Hereafter as well after all this is the real objective. Āmīn.

Birth, name and family

I was born on 16 Shaʿbān 1301 A.H. corresponding with 12 June 1884. It was most probably a Wednesday at the time of true dawn. My historical name is Marghūb Ahmad. I do not have a complete genealogical tree in my possession, but I do know that my father was most interested in this regard. He had made many investigations and compiled a detailed and long genealogical tree. He also had a diary in which he recorded the birth dates, death dates, and important events in the lives of his children. This diary is probably kept somewhere. Although some of the elders in our family referred to history books and very senior elders and joined our lineage to Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, we are essentially known as Shaykh. My mother had informed me that the Shaykhs are Qurayshīs. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best. My father would also refer to himself as a Shaykh, and my grandfather was Shaykh Habībullāh Sāhib. I recall coming across the name Shaykh and hearing this name with reference to several of our elders in the genealogical tree. For example, Shaykh Amānullāh and others. Most of the names of people in our extended family have the name Shaykh before their names and continues to this day. My mother was from the Qādī family. Some people in our extended family have been known as Sayyids since ancient times. They are also related to us.

The greatest honour

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* for having blessed me with the greatest of honours: He made me a follower of the Ashraf al-Makhlūqāt[1] who is the Ashraf ar-Rusul,[2] and included me as

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[1] The most honourable of Allāh's creation – Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.
[2] The most honourable of Allāh's Messengers – Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

an associate of Hadrat Ashraf az-Zaman[1] who is the Ashraf al-Mashā'ikh.[2] I composed the following couplet in this regard:

> Allāh is the One whom I worship. My Prophet is the best of the creation. And my shaykh is the Qutb of our time. I was not worthy of all this.
>
> O Allāh! What is to happen to my sins? O, how am I going to face You one day? Shower Your mercy on me by virtue of my affiliation with the Master of both worlds [Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] and the fact that I have pledged allegiance to the Qutb of our time.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, after receiving these honours upon honours, I have been given the honour of compiling *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. Allāh willing, I hope I am made a manifestation of the following:

> May I be recorded forever on the page of the world.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* safeguard all these honours in my favour, permit me to depart from this world with perfect īmān, and honour me with His eternal proximity and gaze in Jannatul Firdaus. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*. Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* says:

> Do not say that we evil people do not have any value before the King. There is nothing difficult for the generous ones.

If not,

> Who am I to deserve this rose perfume. The sweet gentle morning breeze is by virtue of Your mercy. All praise is due solely to Allāh.

Compilation of Ashraf as-Sawānih

The causes for its compilation combined in a manner which was never imagined. I misunderstood the rules of my pension and therefore requested a pension before time. It was refused. However, I learnt that I was eligible for a two year and four month leave at half my salary. When my pension was refused, I thought to myself that I should at least take the leave because

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[1] The most honourable person of our time – Hadrat Wālā.
[2] The most honourable shaykh of our time – Hadrat Wālā.

if my pension was accepted, I would have still received half or less of my normal salary. This is why I immediately applied for the leave which, by Allāh's grace, was granted. Whenever I requested permission to present myself before Hadrat Wālā, I was granted permission even in the presence of strong obstacles. Before seeking permission [for leave] I had opened the *Dīwān* of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* in order to obtain a good omen. The precondition for the validity of this is that one's beliefs must be correct, he must not believe in its absoluteness. Anyway, my eyes fell on the following couplets on the first page:

> My heart slipped from the chin of your well and hung on to the plait of your hair. How unfortunate that I came out of the well and the pain has started.
>
> That has happened. O shaykh! This is why you will now see me in the idol-house. I now have a need to see the face of the drink-provider and touch the lips of the goblet.
>
> I did not go from the masjid to the tavern by myself. This has been the essence of my destiny from the very first day.

Incidentally, the gist of these couplets was realized exactly. In other words, I wanted to come out of the restrictions of my employment, present myself before Hadrat Wālā and devote myself to Allāh's remembrance with full focus and concentration. However, some time after my arrival here [in Thānah Bhawan], Allāh *ta'ālā* suddenly entrusted me with the task of compiling *Ashraf as-Sawānih* without my even thinking about it. The reasons and causes for its compilation were mentioned at the beginning of this book. This task then progressed to such a level that my entire leave period was spent in it and the first part of the above-quoted couplet was realized to the letter. After all, I am an absolutely lackadaisical person with a free temperament, who is distracted very easily and flees from mental work. I now got caught up in such a long and continuous academic work which was certainly a trap for me. However – all praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* – it was a beloved trap compared to the chains of my employment.

Before the commencement of my leave, I had written a letter to Hadrat Wālā in which I quoted the above couplet and

expressed my misgiving of – Allāh forbid – getting caught in a trap of tribulation. Hadrat Wālā consoled me with the same theme by saying that the trap is a trap of love which is most beloved and a manifestation of the following couplet:

> Its prisoner does not want to be set free from it, and its hunted animal does not want to be set free from its trap.

At the time, the task of *Ashraf as-Sawānih* was not even in my mind. This was with reference to the first line of the couplet. As for the second couplet, it seems that even my name – Khwājah – is mentioned in it. It reads:

> I now have a need to see the face of the drink-provider and touch the lips of the goblet.

This is absolutely clear because by night and day I had to be involved with Hadrat Wālā recording his statements. As for the third couplet:

> I did not go from the masjid to the tavern by myself. This has been the essence of my destiny from the very first day.

This is also very clear because my intention was to spend the night and day in Allāh's remembrance, i.e. the work of the masjid, but the time passed in the work of compiling the biography. Although this work is superior because its benefit is extended to others, while the other work [Allāh's remembrance] is confined to myself, the latter is certainly superior as regards its objective. Furthermore, the work of writing the biography was the work of love, which Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* refers to with the word *kharābāt*. Similarly, I apply the other couplet over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* had predestined for *Ashraf as-Sawānih* to be compiled, serve as a guiding lamp for the seekers and be preserved until the day of Resurrection. The means from the unseen were provided for all this. In short, this honour was decreed in my favour since eternity. All praises are due solely to Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this work from me.

At the time when I was making efforts for my pension and leave, some well-wishers stopped me by saying that if I remained employed [and did not take my pension or did not take my leave], I could be appointed as an Inspector. However,

at the time, most of those who were being appointed as Inspectors were those who had been to England. I jokingly said to my well-wishers: "Bhāi! Only those who have returned from England are being appointed. On the other hand, I have returned from Makkah and Madīnah, why would I be appointed?" I then opened the *Dīwān* of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* and came across the following *ghazal* which was most appropriate to my situation and condition. I was both astounded and pacified by it. Only the first two couplets of the poem were on the previous page. The third couplet which was most suited to my condition was on the first page. The remaining couplets were after it. The *ghazal* reads as follows:

> O heart! Good fortune is your travelling companion. May the gentle breeze from Shīrāz's orchard be on your path.
>
> O dervish! You must travel from the beloved's house again because a spiritual journey and the corner of the Khānqāh is enough for you.
>
> Become the leader of the tavern and drink the wine. This wealth and position of the world is enough for you.
>
> Do not quest for more. Make things easy for yourself – a goblet of pure drink and the moon-like face of the beloved is enough for you.
>
> The sky gives the reins of his objectives to the unintelligent fellow. You, on the other hand, are a man of knowledge and virtue. This sin is enough for you.
>
> The authority of the sorrowful heart opens another place of refuge. The sanctified court of the shaykh is enough for you.
>
> Your birthplace and the breeze from the time of the old beloved…Allāh's pleasure and the prize from the king are enough for you.
>
> O Hāfiz! There is no need for any other *wazīfah*. The supplication made in the middle of the night and the dhikr at true dawn are enough for you.

The above-quoted couplets of Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* have been quoted merely for light-heartedness and as a gift to the reader. The fact of the matter is that Allāh *taʿālā* made such means available to me that despite various types of obstacles and impediments, He enabled a worthless fellow like myself to complete *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Glad-tidings

In the course of writing this biography, I saw Hadrat Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam Hājī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* in a dream wherein he said to me with reference to Hadrat Wālā: "You must tell him that he has my permission to go to Shamlah." The thought which came to my mind is that permission has been granted to compile *Ashraf as-Sawānih* because this is also a form of ascension and it is also an external point as regards the extent of knowledge. I also saw Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *rahimahullāh* in a dream. He said to me: "Your mentor is a very senior shaykh." I had provided details of this dream somewhere in this biography.

In the light of all these conditions and incidents, I have hope that – Allāh willing – *Ashraf as-Sawānih* will be a widely accepted and most beneficial work.

A gift from Hadrat Wālā

In addition to praying for blessings and abundance in my favour on the completion of *Ashraf as-Sawānih,* Hadrat Wālā gave me a topī as a gift. He embellished it by personally writing the following couplet on it:

> This *Ashraf as-Sawānih* is a certificate for its compiler. By virtue of his beauty, he has made a place for himself in my heart and soul.

I reply to the above in the words of ʿĀrif ash-Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*:

> Who am I to be eligible to come into his perfumed thoughts? O you – the one whose dust of his threshold is the crown for my head – you are extremely kind to me.

Ash-Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh* also says:

> The edge of the farmer's hat has reached the sun because a king like yourself cast his shadow on it.

May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this work and make it beneficial. The sequence and layout of this book came about solely through Hadrat Wālā's blessings because I have no idea whatsoever about writing and composing a book. I now bid farewell with the following couplets:

> This sequence and order will remain for years to come. I do not see myself remaining forever.
>
> Perhaps a man of the heart may be kind enough to supplicate in favour of poor people like us.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

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The English translation of this, the third volume of *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, was completed on 21 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1436 A.H. corresponding with 13 January 2015. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā.*

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

Mahomed Mahomedy
Durban, South Africa

FINAL CONCLUSION

Important Note:

As opposed to the first three volumes of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*, this conclusion is deprived of the editing of Hadrat Wālā. Therefore, if the reader comes across any unverified information, it must be considered to be the shortcoming of the memory or the ignorance of this ignorant, worthless, unqualified and useless fellow. It must definitely not be attributed to Hadrat Wālā because he was above such things.

I, Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan – may Allāh *taʿālā* protect him from all internal and external tribulations – who is presently in Thānah Bhawan state:

There was a time when this unqualified and incapable fellow had compiled *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ* with utmost enthusiasm and interest. Now is the day when I have to sit and write its conclusion with regret and remorse. In other words, I have to write details about that sudden tragedy which put an end to all my enthusiasm and destroyed all my hopes.

Oh! With what pen can I write and with what heart can I convey to you that Hadrat Hakīm Aqdas Hakīmul Ummat Mujaddidul Millat Qutb al-ʿĀlam Ashraf al-Auliyā' Shāh Muhammad Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib Thānwī *quddisa sirruhu* departed from this temporary abode at the age of 82 years, three months and eleven days on the 16th of Rajab 1362 A.H. corresponding with the 19th and 20th of July 1943 at around 11:30pm on a Tuesday, and proceeded to his permanent resting place, the Paradise of eternity. He left countless of his beloveds crying and pining for him, and joined with his True Beloved [Allāh *taʿālā*]. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Although it is naturally extremely difficult for me to lift my pen and write on this terrifying and sad incident, it is rationally and prudently necessary for the sake of the consolation of Hadrat Wālā's attendants and associates whose restless and pining requests I am receiving from all sides. This is especially so with regard to those attendants who were not present at the time of Hadrat Wālā's departure. Furthermore, I myself am forced to place a rock over my heart and release the hornet which is within it.

A few conditions and sad incidents will be related with absolute brevity and published because it will not be possible to describe the events to each person individually. Furthermore, the other advantage of writing on this subject is that – Allāh willing – these admonitory and heartbreaking events will, in addition to serving as eye-openers, remove the grief of the grief-stricken hearts and provide solace to them. Allāh willing, they will serve as strong ointments for the injured hearts; ointments which first create trembling and then bring about peace.

The original illness was that of a weak stomach and inflammation of the liver. The effects of this was that Hadrat Wālā would occasionally experience constipation resulting in severe discomfort. At other times it would cause diarrhoea resulting in intense weakness. In addition to this, there was swelling of other body parts. Towards the end, he lost all desire for food and was overcome by drowsiness most of the time. Different doctors were brought, all of whom treated him with genuine consideration and love because most of them were his devoted associates. However, whenever he regained consciousness, the treatment was temporary. None of the doctors could uproot the ailment completely. Finally when he lost the desire for food, he virtually gave up eating. His illness worsened by the day. Hadrat Wālā repeatedly drew the attention of the doctors to this and said: "If this is my condition, the end result must be considered. Although I am ready for it, I consider it necessary to be informed about it."

Despite his incapacitating weakness, he decided to undertake a lengthy journey to Lucknow but a final round of diarrhoea seized him before he could go. It continued with much intensity for about a month, gradually made him bed-ridden and the possibility of a journey was cut off. During this period, he even stopped the few foods which he liked and which were, to a certain extent, providing him with strength. A few days before his demise, he made reference to this condition to some of his close associates by saying: "Now I do not even have any desire for anything. My condition is as described by this couplet of Khwājah Sāhib:

> Every desire has departed from my heart. [O Allāh]!
> Come to me now, I am now in solitude with You.

Hadrat Wālā then spoke highly of this couplet. He was very much attached to it because it was so close to his present

condition. He jokingly said to me on one occasion: "If I had 100 000 rupees, I would have given them to you as a prize for this one couplet." He also said: "Whenever I remember this couplet, I am not satisfied unless I repeat it at least three times." Hadrat Wālā's bond with Allāh *taʿālā* and his disregard for the world can be gauged from this because both these are mentioned in this couplet.

When it was realized that Hadrat Wālā does not have the strength to travel to Lucknow, then on the insistence of his close associates in Lucknow, Shifā' al-Mulk Janāb Hakīm ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, the expert physician of Lucknow was summoned a week before Hadrat Wālā's demise. He had treated Hadrat Wālā previously in Lucknow and he had recovered from his treatment. However, because of the present continuous bouts of diarrhoea and not eating food for quite some time he had become absolutely lean and fragile. As a poet says:

> What can the patient call out for now? All he can ask
> for is the remaining breath which he has.

Although Hadrat Wālā had become totally weak and fragile, and was reduced to skin and bone, whenever he regained his consciousness, his sharpness, perception, planning and organization skills, investigative and research acumen, mental penetration, resolute thinking, accurate judgement, and all other peculiar qualities would come to the fore in their same unique and matchless form which had always been with him when he was enjoying good health. The only difference was that his voice was subdued. In these conditions, not only his attendants and associates, but even his doctors would be deceived into thinking that he had recovered. Previously, despite his severe weakness and illness, the awe and regal authority which was seen on him was a peculiar feature of his illness. But this too had disappeared since the last three or four days and resulted in thoughts of despair. Hadrat Wālā himself said on a few occasions: "Although I am physically discomforted, all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am feeling relaxed." He said on one occasion: "Sometimes the thought comes to me that I am lying uselessly, let me engage in Allāh's dhikr while I am lying down. However, I am so weak, that my tongue too does not want to move, but all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I continue engaging in dhikr with my heart."

One day after the ʿas̱r s̱alāh, he was lying down with his eyes closed. We thought he was in a state of drowsiness. Maulwī Jamīl Aẖmad S̱āẖib asked about a certain food. H̱aḏrat Wālā expressed his irritation and said while his eyes were closed: "What is this foolishness to turn the attention of a person who is himself occupied? Now think carefully and give an answer. One has to be very considerate about these matters." The Maulānā replied: "Very well." H̱aḏrat Wālā said in his peculiar manner of reprimanding: "This is the answer I always get – "very well" – but no one practises."

The continuity of his investigative acumen and mental penetration were of such a level that just a few days before his demise, a money order for 300 rupees was received. The message which was attached to the money order read: "I had taken a vow that if my business is successful, I will send 300 rupees to H̱aḏrat. By Allāh's grace, I have been successful. I am therefore sending this amount of 300 rupees to you. You are its owner and may spend it as you like." I was present at the time and was waiting to see what happens – will he accept the money order or send it back? The reason why I thought this was because it was always H̱aḏrat Wālā's practice that if he had the slightest suspicion, ambiguity or anything which was against his norm, he would immediately write his reason on the money order and send it back.

Although he was bed-ridden, he asked for a pen and – while he was lying down, he wrote with his unstable fingers with utmost care and with much difficulty. He wrote: "First you wrote 'you are its owner'. Then you gave me the right to spend it as I like. This latter statement takes the form of appointing one as a representative. There is a difference in the Sharīʿah between making a person an owner and appointing him as a representative. I am therefore returning [this money order]." I [the compiler] do not recall the words exactly but this is what was meant. The postmen, some of whom were Christians and Hindus, were most astounded. They used to say: "First of all, we never came across anyone who refuses to accept money orders in this way, and here we see them refused daily."

After such a long and chronic illness and at a time when H̱aḏrat Wālā was so weak, yet his mind could think of such intricate matters and distinguish between such fine points. This can be attributed to nothing but his spiritual power

because it seems far-fetched for this to be a result of mental power alone. Then look at the expression of astonishment! What could be said of the level of his caution! Solely on the basis of an ambiguity – that the person probably appointed him as a representative and did not make him the absolute owner of the amount. Although the overwhelming circumstances – to the level of conviction – indicated that the person intended to make Hadrat Wālā the owner of the amount, he unhesitatingly returned such a large amount of money on the slightest doubt. I have rarely come across anyone else taking the precautions which Hadrat Wālā takes with regard to gifts. The major reason for this was his quality of self-respect. He himself used to say: "I am not very pious and righteous. Yes, Allāh *taʿālā* has certainly placed self-respect in my temperament."

Janāb Hakīm ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, the owner of Hamdard Dawā Khānā Delhi, came to visit Hadrat Wālā during this illness. It was his first visit to Thānah Bhawan. He never had any interaction with Hadrat Wālā before this. He sent a sherbet drink from his clinic for Hadrat Wālā. Instead of accepting it as a gift, Hadrat Wālā took it at a price and gave the money to the person who brought it. Later on, the Hakīm Sāhib wanted to send cash or medicine as a gift and sought permission from Hadrat Wālā to send the same. Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply: "I appreciate your love and express thanks over your intention to show kindness to me. But I cannot think of a solution for it. If you have understood it, I ask you: I could not be of any service to you [in the past] and I am not in a position to render any service to you now [because of my illness]. If I were to accept your gift, how will I be able to convince my heart to accept it?" Hadrat Wālā then said verbally: "If I refuse to the end, my gradual refusal will not be offensive. If I accept it, he will be overjoyed."

I recall another astonishing incident with regard to Hadrat Wālā thinking of intricate and fine matters despite his extreme physical weakness. It was his practice that after applying antimony to his eyes, he would pour a few drops of milk in a small teaspoon, moisten the antimony dip-stick in the milk, and apply it to his eyes. A doctor must have told him that this is beneficial. Hājī was under the employ of Janāb Nawāb Sāhib Bāghpat. The Nawāb Sāhib had sent him to serve Hadrat Wālā. This Hājī was given the responsibility of rendering this service [of applying the milk] to Hadrat Wālā. When Hadrat Wālā

returned the teaspoon to him, he threw the remaining milk which was in it. He did this because the milk was only a few drops, furthermore it had become mixed with antimony and Hadrat Wālā's tears. It was therefore not suitable for consumption. When the thought crossed Hadrat Wālā's mind after a short while, he asked: "What happened to that milk?" The man replied: "Hadrat, I threw it away." He said: "It has gone to waste. The parrot would have drunk it." (there was a domesticated parrot in the house). Look at how his mind went to the correct usage for even that useless milk! Hadrat Wālā then said: "I find it most burdensome to waste even the smallest bounty of Allāh *taʿālā*."

This practice of Hadrat Wālā was certainly observed by night and day. The most insignificant items, like a small piece of string which was used to tie a packet or parcel, or a paper which was used as a wrapping would be kept safely by him. Items of this nature would then come to use when needed.

I consider the most astonishing incident which displays his acute investigation of matters to have manifested itself the last time he felt unconscious and a few moments before he passed away. He asked: "How much longer for maghrib?" Someone said that there were ten minutes left. He immediately asked: "Ten minutes for the entry of maghrib time or ten minutes for its expiry?" Allāh is the greatest! Look! That quality of intricate investigation remained with him even in his last moments. That same quality was directed throughout his life towards the sciences and various branches of knowledge. It continued exposing various intricate matters and fine points which his books are filled with.

Despite his debilitating weakness, he continued listening to the letters which were written to him and would dictate replies to them. Even in this case, people would be left astounded at how the subject matter of each reply was most precise in every way and all-encompassing from every angle. This, despite the fact that he would sometimes be overcome by drowsiness while dictating. Once he regained his consciousness, he would continue dictating without any difference in the sequence and fluency of the reply.

I recall one incident in this regard. A woman was afflicted by a calamity. She was the daughter of an old friend of Hadrat Wālā since his days at Kānpūr. She wrote a very pain-filled letter

which was quite long, contained several themes and many requests. Hadrat Wālā listened to the entire letter. Although we assumed that he occasionally fell drowsy while listening to it being read to him, when he dictated its entire reply, those who were present in the assembly were left astounded and astonished. He did not leave out a single part for which he did not give a reply, and that too in a most affectionate, consoling, impressive, concise, firm and sequenced manner. What can be said about the level of the presence of his mind during this period of drowsiness! Janāb Hakīm Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī who was Hadrat Wālā's doctor at the time said: "This drowsiness is not a medical condition. It seems to me that it stems from his engrossment with and focus on Allāh *taʿālā*. I have come across many patients who suffer from drowsiness. When they recover from it, some of its effects most certainly remains with them. Their mind is somewhat confused. But here we see him even more mentally alert when he gets up and we do not perceive any effect of the drowsiness on him. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best."

In addition to the above reply which I mentioned, I have copies of many other replies which were written in this condition but with the same level of mental alertness. However, at this point I will quote the gist of the letter of that woman, Hadrat Wālā's complete reply, and a few other correspondences from *Husn al-ʿAzīz*. They are worthy of consideration on the basis that they are also the last of Hadrat Wālā's memoirs.

The Gist of a Woman's Letter With Hadrat Wālā's Reply

I am the daughter of your old friend and associate (such and such person). I am a widow. My young brother's letter is also included for your consideration.

Grief over the passing away of my father has become unbearable to me. I am pleased with Allāh's decision and am also exercising patience, but my heart and mind have become weak on account of this tragedy. I am most distressed and restless. I am carrying out my religious and worldly practices and activities, but unfortunately I cannot find attachment even in salāh and the Qur'ān. My leprosy has also intensified. There was a time when white spots had disappeared after receiving a taʿwīdh from Hadrat, but they are reappearing. This illness has brought with it many other pains and discomforts. I tried all sorts of treatments. My heart now tells me to plead to you. For

Allāh's sake, please make duʿā' for the removal of this illness and kindly provide me with a taʿwīdh and duʿā' for it. I dictated this letter with many hopes because I am quite heart-broken. I hope you will shower much more affection to me than what you did to my father. I have hope in Allāh *taʿālā* that if you make duʿā' for the removal of this illness, I will get cured. My father had a stroke and passed away. His mental condition was unstable for one year due to the effect of this illness. Half his body was paralysed and he could not perform salāh during this period. Even before the stroke, he missed most of his salāh because of the severity of his illness. I am sending 100 rupees via insured post to you. Use this amount to calculate the missed salāhs for one or two years, or whatever the case may be and spend it as you feel suitable. The other point is that I request you to add my deceased father's and mother's name in your duʿā' for forgiveness. I am sending a money order of 20 rupees for this purpose. Finally, I plead to you to make duʿā' of forgiveness for my father and your friend. My father was a true friend of yours and had a lot of faith in you.

Reply

After offering salām to both brother and sister, I made duʿā' for your father and extend my condolences. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. I am extremely grieved by your distress and the absence of your overseer. May Allāh *taʿālā* help you and remove all worries from you. You did not estimate the number of missed salāhs. It would have been easier for me had you done this. Based on the information which you provided [the stroke which lasted one year and the intense illness for one year before that], I have estimated the missed salāhs for two years. If, in your estimation, he has missed more salāhs, then you must inform me. I will estimate with the help of your information. Although it will be difficult for me, I will bear this difficulty. As for the 20 rupees which you sent for duʿā' of forgiveness, it should be known that duʿā' of forgiveness is a total act of worship for which no recompense is permissible. However, a beneficial and permissible way out is to give this money to a poor person or spend it in a good cause with the intention of conveying the rewards to both deceased persons. When the reward reaches them, they will be automatically pardoned. If you do not approve of this method, the money will be returned to you. All heirs will have a right to this money. If any heir gave the money from his or her own side, it will be his or her property and can

be spent for his or her personal needs. As for your complaint about the absence of your heart in salāh, my answer is that it is compulsory for you to make an effort to have presence of heart, but not compulsory for the heart to be present. If you commence salāh with the intention of presence of heart, you will be absolved of your responsibility irrespective of whether you experience presence of heart or not. Similarly, when a person has an illness, he or she is duty-bound to adopt measures for it and to make du'ā' as well. As for the results – i.e. to regain health – this is solely in Allāh's control. You must place your trust in Him and continue with your treatment. I am making du'ā' for your recovery. I do not remember what I had asked you to read previously. I am writing a du'ā' at present. You must read it and blow on the medicine which you are taking:

اللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُنُوْنِ وَالْجُذَامِ وَسَيِّئِ الْأَسْقَامِ

O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from lunacy, leprosy and evil illnesses.

Read it two or three times before taking the medication. There is no harm in reading it more times.

Note from the compiler: This is the reply to a very lengthy letter, the gist of which was quoted above. Hadrat Wālā heard the letter just once and dictated its reply without asking for it to be re-read. He dictated the letter when the time of his departure from this world had drawn extremely close, when he was very weak, and when he was repeatedly overcome by drowsiness. However, whenever he regained consciousness, he continued dictating the reply.

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A seeker wrote: "My heart is desirous of meeting Hadrat Wālā. For Allāh's sake, I request permission to present myself." Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply: "Does the adding of the words 'for Allāh's sake' not put others in a compelling situation? If I were to reply to this and said: 'For Allāh's sake don't ever come here' what will happen? May Allāh save us from personal motives in the sense that we worry about ourselves and do not give consideration to others. If it was possible for me to permit you to come, and these words were

not written, do you think I would have still not given consideration to it?”

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Hadrat Maulānā Asghar Husayn Sāhib *dāma zilluhum* was a personality to whom Hadrat Wālā accorded a lot of respect. He expressed his intention to visit Hadrat Wālā via Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī with the objective of [obtaining the reward for] visiting a sick person. Hadrat Wālā said: The following reply must be written to him: “I can neither bear to disobey you nor can I bear to see your and my own discomfort. I will accept whichever option you give preference to. I will accept it whether I like it or not.”

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A seeker detailed his [spiritual] ailments, inabilities and worries about missing out his dhikr practices. Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply: “Have you still not learnt that a defect or missing out due to a valid reason does not decrease one’s reward in any way? What, then, is the reason for this apprehension? And who told you that wudū’ is a prerequisite for dhikr and seeking forgiveness? Does it not smack of ingratitude and dissatisfaction to concoct rulings on your own accord and to turn the ease which Allāh *taʿālā* provided into difficulty?”

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A youngster who is employed in an office wrote a long letter describing his acute distress. He provided details about a chronic illness, the inundation of superstitions, whisperings and fears which were causing harsh impediments to his worldly and Dīnī tasks. He expressed fears of severe danger with respect to both. He went to the extent that he is experiencing a strange type of terror in his mind which is causing him to consider suicide at times. He also wrote that he no longer has the capacity to do good deeds, he is only relying on supernatural feats. He read the stories of many pious elders who, through their focus, Allāh *taʿālā* cured the worst of patients and set right their hearts.

In most cases Hadrat Wālā would not read so long letters, and because of his ill-health and weakness, he would dictate the following reply and send them back: “As a result of my illness, I

do not expect to regain my strength for at least one month. I will write the reply to your letter after one month.” However, because the above youngster was certainly deserving of mercy, Hadrat Wālā read the entire letter word for word notwithstanding his intensely frail condition. Instead of expressing his disapproval of the letter to those who were present, he said: “My heart has been severely afflicted by his distress.”

Hadrat Wālā then dictated the following reply on the reverse side of an envelope. He apologized for writing on the envelope by saying: “There was insufficient place on your letter, I do not have extra writing paper at present and I considered it shameful to ask for it. This is why I chose to write in this way [on the reverse side of an envelope].” Incidentally, the length of the reply was as much as the reverse envelope could accommodate – not a word more and not a word less. Hadrat Wālā expressed his joy over this by saying: “All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the paper which I had decided to use, Allāh *taʿālā* instilled exactly that amount of subject matter in my heart although I did not even intend doing that nor tried to do it.” Divine help of this nature has always been with Hadrat Wālā. A few incidents in this regard were related in this book. Any way, the fact that Hadrat Wālā was aided and inspired by Allāh *taʿālā* is more glaring than the sun.

Now look at Hadrat Wālā’s immediate reply to the long and confusing letter for which he provided a complete, clarifying and consoling answer.

I read every word of your letter and my heart was severely pained by it. However, the procedure which you chose for yourself is out of my control (i.e. the focus and supernatural feats of pious elders). As for the advice which I can give you by my choice, your heart will probably not value it nor will you be able to practise on it. This is my advice: You must first make arrangements for a sizeable amount of money. If your salary will not suffice, you must make a collection from your well-wishers. Allāh willing, I too will help you out. You must then choose a place where you will live for a long period of time and where there is a medical doctor who will treat your mind and heart, and a spiritual doctor who will treat your superstitions and whisperings. In other words, he will teach you a course of action which will remove these superstitions and whisperings

or reduce them. You must also have an intelligent well-wisher with you all the time who would constantly provide solace to you, and ensure you practise on the treatments of the two doctors [medical and spiritual]. You must hand yourself completely to him and discard all your own views and opinions. Inform him of whatever difficulties you encounter. He will follow his own procedure for some of your difficulties, and consult with the two doctors for other difficulties. Allāh willing, all your worries will disappear. Together with all these procedures, it will be essential for you to do one particular thing from the beginning to the end. For every distressing condition which you experience, you must have full conviction of being rewarded for it. Furthermore, you will not even doubt having committed a sin in any unintentional situation. I am also making du'ā' for you. You must consider me to be only a well-wisher and advisor – not a medical doctor, a spiritual doctor nor your companion regarding whom I said you must obtain one [to be with you]. However, since I gave you my advice with real pain from the heart, you will certainly experience blessings in it, it will have an effect, and you will gain freedom from this imprisonment."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the grandeur of this Hakīmul Ummat! What a complete prescription in which every condition of the patient is considered. What better prescription could there have been for such a chronic patient? There is another prescription of a similar nature. Although I have a copy of another more impressive prescription which was written towards the end of his life, I fear this discussion getting too lengthy so I will not quote it here. I still have to write on Hadrat Wālā's last moments so I am sufficing with this.

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I have to say at the outset that because of his illness and weak condition, Hadrat Wālā had stopped the direct rectification of seekers since quite some time. Except for very special situations, he would advise them to consult with his khulafā'. These special situations included people who held lofty positions of worldly authority. Hadrat Wālā used to give the following reason for making an exception for such people: "People of this nature will not have any regard for anyone else. If they do not have that regard, they will not obtain any Dīnī benefit."

A high ranking officer in the education department who was an expert in English and had studied in England began corresponding with Hadrat Wālā. The reply to his first letter was short, so Hadrat Wālā dictated it to someone. The second letter required a detailed reply, therefore, despite his physical inability and drowsiness, he wrote it himself and said to me: "Anyway, I still have some strength to take the responsibility of seeing to the rectification of a few persons like him." The two letters with their replies are quoted below. Unfortunately he could not reply to the third letter because Hadrat Wālā departed from this world by then. Fifteen days after this correspondence, his final bout of diarrhoea commenced and put an end to everything within one month.

The First Letter

My master. As-salāmu 'alaykum. I had the honour of meeting you about 20 years ago in Kīrānah. At the time, I was studying in 'Alīgarh and was being treated by Hakīm Mahbūb 'Alī Sāhib Marhūm. I had come to Kīrānah for the same reason. During my stay in Kīrānah, I used to – by and large – come and visit you in the late afternoon. The effects of the affection which Hadrat showed to me are still imprinted on my heart. I am a resident of such and such place, the son of such and such person, the nephew of such and such pious personality, and the cousin of such and such person. After completing my studies in 'Alīgarh, I proceeded to England [to further my studies]. On my return, I got employed in the education department and presently hold such and such position. I would like to renew the bond which I had developed with you while in Kīrānah. It is my heartfelt desire to attach myself to Hadrat and my heart becomes illuminated by your teachings. I hope that Hadrat is feeling well. That is all.

8 May 1943.

Reply

As-salāmu 'alaykum. I was most pleased with your letter. My heart poured out with du'ā' for you. I am here to render every possible service to every Muslim. However, the nature of the service must be clear and specified. It is your responsibility to specify this. After that, I will be able to present the programme and procedure. I am always making du'ā' for you.

The Second Letter

Our mentor. As-salāmu ʿalaykum. Your noble letter really encouraged me. May Allāh *taʿālā* give you a very long life for the guidance of people like us. Āmīn.

My mental development took place under Western philosophy and the Western view of life. However, bearing in mind that my early upbringing had taken place in a purely Islamic environment, the West and its views could not overwhelm me – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Despite this, it has certainly created a lot of confusion in my beliefs. I very often experience moments when the path appears completely clear to me and all doubts are removed. But after some time, I experience that same conflict. From the statements of Hadrat which I was able to study, I came to one conclusion, i.e. as long as I do not hand over myself to a Sufi master, I will not find the path. Twenty years ago I had requested bayʿah with Hadrat when I was in Kīrānah. The reply which I received was: "Not now." Hadrat was probably waiting for a time when I have a true and genuine quest. I have now been rendered incapable by my weaknesses and lost hope with my lack of courage. I have presented myself before Hadrat so that you may teach me, rectify my self, and make duʿā' in my favour to Allāh *taʿālā* that He gives me the courage and inspires me to practise on your instructions. Āmīn.

Your servant
1 June 1943.

Reply

My beloved and honourable brother.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum. I received your letter which was, to a certain extent, a letter of guidance. After having read it, it reached my heart from where I gauged your genuine quest and correct understanding. This brought a special type of joy to me.

Māshā Allāh, all your perceptions with regard to what the prerequisites of the path are, viz. (1) the turmoil in your condition and the need for its tranquillity, (2) the manner of acquiring it, i.e. by selecting an advisor who desires your wellbeing, and (3) treading the path under his guidance – have all been conveyed briefly in your letter. All that remains are the details. These commence – according to your availability – with spending some time in the good company of an advisor, informing him periodically of the ups and down of your

condition, practising and following his counsels with absolute silence [without any objection whatsoever]. And in the case where physical companionship is not possible, there will have to be a programme of correspondence with him with the same prerequisites. Thereafter, in the light of changes in your conditions, decisions will be passed. It is not possible to specify them at present.

Was salām
Ashraf ʿAlī, Thānah Bhawan
30 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

Glory to Allāh! Look at Hadrat Wālā's unique and total dissection of the straightforward but sincere letter of the seeker together with academic themes and Sufi definitions. Look how he, from the seeker's own writing, extracted such a beneficial course of action for the rest of his life, and presented it to him in such a beautiful and comprehensive manner.

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A seeker who was caught up in a severe calamity wrote a very distressing letter and added: "I am fed up with this dreadful life and prefer death to life." He did not disclose his identity; he merely wrote: "A sinful person". Instead of writing his name after this, he dotted the line. His name was not written on the reply envelope, only his address was provided. Hadrat Wālā first asked: "Is this calamity within your control or out of it?" He replied: "Initially it was within my control, but unfortunately it has slipped from my control and choice." Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply: "It amounts to total ignorance to consider a sin to be beyond one's control even if it has entrenched itself as a habit. As long as such beliefs are not corrected, a person cannot be treated."

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A scholar wrote: "I have experienced this several times: When I am reading books on Sufism, especially the *Mathnawī* of Maulānā Rūm, I see many good dreams. Sometimes righteous personalities visit me in my dreams while at other times I see myself performing salāh. Once I stop reading these books, dreams of this nature also stop."

Hadrat Wālā gave the following reply: "This is connected to one's constant thoughts. The erudite scholars say that bad

dreams are results of the light of the heart, like how we are able to see harmful things in the light. Anyway, a dream never has an effect on a person. Rather, it is an effect in itself."

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A seeker wrote: "I am having very disturbing dreams for the past one to one and half months." He also related a dream which he had seen the day before.

Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply: "A dream never has an effect on a person no matter how bad it is. It is not a shortcoming or defect to see such dreams. Neither is it the result of spiritual illness which needs to be treated."

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A seeker wrote: "I request bay'ah solely as a source of blessings."

Hadrat Wālā dictated this reply: "Can there be a limit to a person's ignorance about the value of bay'ah?"

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Maulwī Habīb Ahmad Sāhib Kīrānwī rarely has faith and confidence in anyone. However, he had so much of faith in Hadrat Wālā that he believed that no matter what Hadrat Wālā wills, Allāh *ta'ālā* certainly fulfils it for him. He applied for a stipend from a municipality and wrote to Hadrat Wālā with a detailed explanation of how much he needed it. He tried to convince Hadrat Wālā in this regard and said: "If the need for it comes in Hadrat's mind, I would have achieved my objective."

Hadrat Wālā remained silent for a long time. It seemed as though he was focussing solely on Allāh *ta'ālā* and that he was developing a hope in his heart in line with the Maulānā's request and expectation. He then dictated the following reply: "My heart was very much affected. From this you can gauge what my heart must be desiring for you and how much! However, these matters are solely in Allāh's control. So much so, where we feel that someone has an apparent control, the following absolute text negates such a thought:

مَا تَشَاؤُنَ اِلَّا اَنْ يَّشَاءَ اللهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

You cannot will it unless Allāh, the master of all the worlds, wills.[1]

As for making duʿā’ and having hopes, these are certainly the servant’s duty. I too am making duʿā’ for you with all my heart.”

Glory to Allāh! Look at how he combined affection with reality.

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I feel I should also quote a letter and its reply which is with reference to the Muslim League. It was received from Africa and is related to the current situation.

The Subject Matter of The Letter

The editor of a newspaper here [in Africa] published the following editorial. Muslims must join the All India Muslim League. To object to whatever the leader, founders and members are doing and intend doing, or to pose inappropriate questions to them entails open enmity to Islam and Muslims. He also stated that the All India Muslim League is neither a religious party nor is its leader a religious scholar.

Ever since its inception, the Muslim League never claimed to be a religious party nor is its operation religious. In the light of the above, we ask your respected self if it is permissible according to the Sharīʿah to join the Muslim League or to support it financially? We hope you will supply us with a detailed and referenced answer which would put our minds at ease.

Reply

Was a similar question ever posed to the Turks as regards fighting against the Russians and others? If you did, which scholar did you pose the question to and what answer did you receive? And how did you act in response to his answer? If you did not pose such a question, what is the reason for the present question? What is the difference between the two?

Another Question

We have learnt from the newspaper editor that your respected self supports the Muslim League. Is this correct? If you

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[1] Sūrah at-Takwīr, 81: 29.

consider it appropriate, write the gist of your support or absence of it. We will appreciate it.

Reply

It is against the Sharīʿah to pose such a question about a person. Your first question was rational, and I answered it.

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Hadrat Wālā was an expert in providing solace and comfort to people. The lives of many who were on the verge of suicide were saved. The solace which he provided was not superficial but genuine. This quality of Hadrat Wālā is accepted by all. So much so, a dervish who belonged to a completely different school of thought sent his associate to Hadrat Wālā by saying to him: "You will not find solace anywhere else. If you want solace and comfort, you will have to go there [to Hadrat Wālā]."

Hadrat Wālā's Last Letter

What I wrote about Hadrat Wālā providing solace and comfort was actually a prelude to his last letter which he dictated – despite being extremely weak and on his death-bed - in reply to a letter which he received from his senior khalīfah, Janāb Maulānā Muhammad ʿĪsā Sāhib.[1] The Maulānā had written: "I am suffering from a stroke. I resorted to many medications and duʿā's. I have gauged from my condition that this appears to be my terminal illness. I request your duʿā' for a good end."

Although Hadrat Wālā was himself on his death-bed, look at the consoling and comforting reply which he dictated, and how he fulfilled the Maulānā's request for a good end. He dictated the following: "I am very much grieved by your illness. I am making duʿā' for your good health with my heart and soul. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable your blessings to continue. It is essential to make duʿā' for pardon and wellbeing in every condition. As for a good end, every person is in need of it even when he is enjoying

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[1] Hadrat ʿĪsā Sāhib Allāhābādī passed away at the time when the conclusion to this biography was being published and – Allāh willing – joined with his shaykh in Jannatul Firdaus. He passed away on 21 March 1944 from the same illness which is mentioned in the letter. To Allāh we belong and to him is our return. (Muhammad Shafīʿ Deobandī, *may Allāh pardon him*)

good health. Based on this principle, I am making this duʿā' as well – for you and for myself also."

Incidentally, this is the last letter containing a duʿā' for a good end. It has been quoted from *H̲usn al-ʿAzīz* and on which *H̲usn al-ʿAzīz* was concluded forever. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

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The son of a close associate of H̲ad̲rat Wālā started with a certain practice with eggs in the hope of getting children. He was hopeful of his wife falling pregnant but it proved to be incorrect. He wrote expressing his intense grief in the following words: "I am so grief-stricken over the fact that the practice with the eggs went to waste. I can feel nothing but grief and sorrow."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the eloquent and impressive manner in which H̲ad̲rat Wālā provides solace to him. "I am sorrowful and astonished at the same time. This is actually Allāh's mercy. When He saves us from any attachment, it is really a boon. We ought to be thankful for it, and not grief stricken. If this is really an occasion to be grief stricken, you never expressed your grief over the fact that I myself do not have any children. What type of love is this [what type of love do you have for me]?"

In short, H̲ad̲rat Wālā would choose the most effective and appropriate theme and tone which came to his mind for the purpose of providing solace and comfort to people. Further more, his solace used to have an immediate effect on the person. A scholar wrote: "I have returned from my hometown but I have no peace whatsoever. My journeys are continuous. The more I dislike travelling, the more I am caught up in it. I try not to be affected by it in the fulfilment of my spiritual practices under such circumstances. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone."

Look at the consoling and admonitory manner in which he replied, while bearing in mind the reality. H̲ad̲rat Wālā wrote: "All this is part of your training and rectification. Sometimes it takes the form of enthusiasm for which one is instructed to be grateful. At other times it takes on a disliked form for which one is ordered to remain patient. Everything changes with the changes in conditions and times."

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Observe the following letter of a close relative, viz. Maulwī Ih̲tishām al-H̲aq S̲āh̲ib Kīrānwī.

First Letter

I am compelled to present my condition after a year-long internal conflict. I hope you will show mercy to this sinful fellow and set right my Hereafter. I qualified from Deoband about four years ago. The general trend is that those who have qualified, leave with liberal views as regards knowledge and practice. I also left in a similar manner although not to a very large extent. I certainly disregarded the ways of our pious elders and was quite distant from action and practice. My clothing and appearance were like a materialist and I was quite liberal in my views. Consequently, I was over-awed by British civilization and had the ways and mannerisms of those Maulwīs who were captivated by the West. I always read their magazines and literature, and was entrapped by their expressions and literary skills. Based on this, although I was a Maulwī, I went and wrote English exams and also worked in an English school. I assumed I was a successful Maulwī and was proud over it. However, I came to my senses recently and my inner self reprimanded me. Two years ago you saw me wearing a Turkish hat and Western shoes, and out of your affection, you said to me: "All these things are not becoming of Maulwīs." Subsequently, I quickly gave up wearing that hat and other similar items, but no real change came into me.

Incidentally, the people of the place where I am staying and of the masjid where I perform tarāwīh̲, insist on me to perform the jumuʿah s̲alāh. I also commenced delivering lectures periodically. While quoting subject matter from the writings of Abul Kalām and others, I came across your *Mawā'iz̲*. There was no limit to my astonishment when I saw the power and extent of the subject matter which would probably not be found in major books of tafsīr. It is so unfortunate that my heedlessness deprived me of the sweetness of real knowledge and I had been immersed by the deception of literary prose. Subsequently, I did not study any other book apart from your *Mawā'iz̲*. During this period, I attended several of your assemblies. The more I read the *Mawā'iz̲* and the more assemblies I attended, the more I felt the dust and grime leaving me. I also began seeing my weaknesses very clearly. I request H̲ad̲rat to show mercy on my

condition, to steer me, accept my bayʿah and undertake my rectification. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward you with the best of rewards and perpetuate your blessings.

Reply

My dear brother. As-salāmu ʿalaykum.

I was overjoyed when I read your letter. All praise is due to Allāh that the reality has been exposed to you. May Allāh *taʿālā* increase you in your insight and steadfastness. In the present situation, companionship is the real need. If this is not possible, one has to study the works and speeches of the erudite scholars. It is essential to pay particular attention to this. As for bayʿah, its sense has been acquired, and it is not necessary to hasten in realizing its form.

Was salām.

Second Letter

Content: I was extremely happy and most satisfied at receiving your reply to my letter. I was waiting anxiously for your letter and saw you in a dream on the day when I expected to receive it. Although I do not remember the details of the dream, I did feel quite peaceful. Reading your blessed letter that same afternoon completed my joy.

Reply: May Allāh *taʿālā* convey you to the reality.

Content: Whatever Hadrat prescribed is the reality and absolutely correct. In fact, I myself perceive that the condition which pervades me when I attend your assembly does not pervade me when I read your books. Unfortunately, the worldly occupations in which I am immersed do not allow me to attend the assemblies of the Ahlullāh. Whoever I went to with these thoughts, I heard nothing but concerns about increasing one's wealth and authority and earning a livelihood. I abstain from going to the wealthy and affluent because they will certainly consider my visit to be motivated by something. Now, even some ʿulamā' think in a similar way based on their influences and authority. I wish I could stay in Hadrat's company for a long period of time. In such a case, I will have both, a peaceful abode and an affectionate companion. Anyway, I will continue hoping and praying for the better, while continuing with the lesser alternative, viz. diligently studying Hadrat's *Mawā'iz*. As

long as I cannot find a peaceful abode, I will spend my free time in the corner of my house.

Reply: This is a correct plan of action. The one who is excused is conferred with the effects of companionship in this way.

Content: I am not in a hurry to pledge bayʿah. The purpose of mentioning bayʿah was to convey to Hadrat my desire to set right and rectify my conditions. It is not for me to insist or hasten in anything. What you prescribe and when you prescribe it – that alone will be correct and be able to benefit me.

Reply: Congratulations on your knowledge.

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There were many people of wealth and authority who used to revert to Hadrat Wālā. He used to treat them according to their rank as per the instruction in a Hadīth:

أنزلوا الناس منازلهم

Treat people according to their ranks.

However, he did this while applying his principles – especially those which are mentioned in his bequests: "A leader [ʿālim or shaykh] should not behave in an uncouth manner with the rich nor should he interact too much with them. As far as possible, he should not make them his objective, especially for worldly benefit."

Janāb ʿAbd as-Samad Sāhib who was in-charge of military affairs for the Nizām of Hyderabad wrote to Hadrat Wālā about his impressions when he had come to visit. He wrote: "I was so overjoyed at being able to present myself to Hadrat that I constantly wished I could acquire this good fortune again. I regularly think of the few moments which I spent in your august company. The only regret I have is that time was very short and the pure company came to a quick end."

"On account of his proximity, Janāb Hāfiz Nawāb Sāhib Bāghpat had several opportunities of meeting you while this distant fellow [referring to himself] is still deprived. I recall many of Hadrat's statements…When my journey ends, I will certainly take the opportunity of presenting myself…May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain the shadow of eminent personalities like you."

Now observe the reply which Hadrat Wālā wrote. He neither discarded his principles, nor did he treat the person in an uncultured manner and against his rank. Then look at the subtle manner in which he conveyed his temperament which was mentioned above, i.e. one must not intermingle too much with wealthy people.

"As-salāmu 'alaykum. Your letter turned our absent and distant meeting into a present and close one. May Allāh *ta'ālā* confer you with goodness for this love of yours. After your departure, my heart hurt from thinking of you but your greater esteem and distinguished position prevented me from taking the first step of writing to you. But this no longer exists because your respected self thought of me and wrote to me. This is why I consider myself to be permitted to reply to you. In future also, my courage to address you will be conditional to your thinking of me [and writing to me]. If you do, I will be able to reply. As for your other situations, I will suffice with du'ā'. Your desire to meet me has spontaneously made me think of a statement of a grateful person:

> Discharging the right of love is showing respect to the friend.

Your mention of Nawāb Sāhib Bāghpat made me think of a statement of a person who was lacking in courage:

> My remembrance is better than you because it is in this assembly.

Bearing in mind my [physical] condition, our short meeting was similar to a small amount of food for a person having a weak stomach. His stomach cannot bear more food. An affectionate nurse may be disappointed by his little food intake, but as for the patient, although he will be naturally sorrowful for not being able to eat more, he is rationally grateful. The repeated meetings with the Nawāb Sāhib Bāghpat resulted in a lesser food intake. My relationship with Nawāb Sāhib Bāghpat has been coming down for generations. It is like water which, although it is plentiful, the stomach can bear it. Your recalling my statements is similar to a person who is accustomed to eating exotic foods. He thinks of vegetables because they are new to him. Anyway, I am well, I am making du'ā' for my benefactors and appreciate the gratitude of your respected self. Was salām."

In his second letter, he expressed his, his mother's and wife's expression of extreme joy at Hadrat Wālā's kind and affectionate words. He also informed him that he will be sending 150 rupees. He concluded his letter thus: "I pray I get an opportunity to present myself once again because I constantly think of those priceless moments which were spent in listening to the statements of your respected self. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain your shadow for a long time for the rectitude and guidance of the Islamic world."

Hadrat Wālā replied as follows:

My respected and honourable brother.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāh.

I was most happy and thankful to receive your affectionate letter. For such a busy personality to think of a worthless person like me is nothing but the highest form of kindness. I cannot recompense for it with anything except duʿā'. The happiness of the two chaste women [referring to the person's mother and wife] has made me feel even more embarrassed. Their happiness is like a marginal note to the main text. I add them in my duʿā' as well, and I especially say 'Āmīn' to your duʿā'. The money order which you sent as a gift fits exactly with the saying:

> What a wonderful load and how excellent is the increase.

The effect of your sincerity is that I do not accept the favours of most wealthy people. I continued thinking about it and found myself making an exception to this rule. I will therefore gladly accept it as a bounty from Allāh *taʿālā* and you as the means for the bounty. I make duʿā' for you and express my gratitude to you. What can I say in response to the words of love which you expressed at the end except for what used to be said in the past:

> Discharging the right of love is showing respect to the friend, otherwise how will the poor lover be happy.

Was salām
Ashraf ʿAlī, Thānah Bhawan.

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A student who was studying English and also wrote the FA exams wrote to Hadrat Wālā with a request for duʿā' and a taʿwīdh. He added: "Allāh willing, I will certainly take the honour of coming to meet Hadrat Wālā. This is the first time in my life that I am corresponding with such a powerful personality and I am in constant trepidation as to how Hadrat Wālā will receive my letter because I have no knowledge of the etiquette which must be followed when addressing great personalities of this world. I hope that your respected self will pardon me if I commit any mistake."

Observe Hadrat Wālā's reply:

"I am making duʿā' for your success. I do not know of any taʿwīdh or incantation for this purpose. I do not know who put this idea in your mind that I am a powerful personality. Strictly speaking, I can refer to myself as the weakest. However, I can easily say that in comparison to the powerful ones, Allāh does make me more powerful than them, and in comparison to the weak ones, He does make me the weakest. Now you can decide what I am."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the subtle manner in which he clarified the reality of the situation and also expressed very subtly that he will be treated in the manner in which he comes. If he comes as a powerful person, he will find Hadrat Wālā to be more powerful. If he comes as a humble person, he will find Hadrat Wālā to be even more humble.

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I came across a unique theme of consolation and solace in a seeker's letter. It was not transcribed anywhere. There are many letters of this nature. May Allāh *taʿālā* provide a way of collating all of them. The seeker described a severe spiritual condition and sought consolation. Hadrat Wālā replied: "Consolation is not the objective, manifestation is. It is majestic at certain times. This is what is experienced at present."

Hadrat Wālā added: "This condition is a blessed struggle which brings most praiseworthy results. These will make their appearance at their time. The foundation of those results is being built at present. You must continue with the task at hand as much as possible. Do not focus on these conditions. However, you must continue informing me of your condition.

Allāh willing, all conditions will become pleasing in the near future.”

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A woman wrote a letter requesting bay‘ah but it was at a time when Hadrat Wālā was in his final stages of physical debility. It was not his practice to refer any woman to any of his khulafā’ because he felt it most appropriate to be extremely cautious in matters related to women. It was only this one woman – due to Hadrat Wālā’s critical condition – that he accepted her bay‘ah, but instead of undertaking to instruct and tutor her on his own, he asked her to revert to one of his khulafā’. He added: “You must correspond with him via a mahram. Never ever write a letter directly to him.”

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A woman got her husband to write a letter in her words: “Sometimes I advise my husband when he leaves out salāh or some other Dīnī responsibility. There are times when this results in an argument. He says to me that I have no right to advise him. Hadrat Wālā, kindly write whether he is right in what he is saying. Can I advise him?” Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply: “Every person has the right of advising. However, if the other person does not realize what is beneficial for him, it is not necessary on the advisor to convey benefit to him especially so when it results in tribulations and arguments.”

In this conflict between the husband and wife, Hadrat Wālā did not say whether the husband was right or the wife. Instead, he advised both – especially the husband. As the saying goes: To kill two birds with one stone. Allāh *ta‘ālā* had conferred Hadrat Wālā with great dexterity in passing a final decision. Observe another question and answer:

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Question

A poetry recital was held here. The following chorus reads:

Everything is permissible in the intoxication of love.

All the ‘ulamā’ discussed this verse which resulted in differences and arguments. Some of them say that it is impermissible while others say it is permissible. It was finally

agreed to ask you for a decision in this regard. Everyone has concurred to accept whatever decision you pass. We request you to explain on what basis it is permissible – if it is in fact permissible – and on what basis it is impermissible if it is impermissible. It will be highly appreciated if you could provide proofs from the Qur'ān, Hadīth, statements of the Sufis and others.

Answer

The question is irregular. You ought to have quoted the proofs of the views of both groups so that you would have understood the answer in a more insightful manner. I am now writing the answer voluntarily from my side although there is a possibility that you will not fully comprehend it. The answer is:

In colloquial usage, the word "everything" is used in the meaning of "most things, many things". For example, in the story of Dāwūd and Sulaymān *ʿalayhimas salām* the following statement is quoted in the Qur'ān:

وَاُوْتِيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

We have been given of everything.

وَاُوْتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

She was given everything.

The above verse of poetry can be taken in the same meaning. Intricate points of this nature are to be found in uncontrollable intoxication. That is all.

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Hadrat Wālā used to receive some very emotional and expressive letters, but he was never affected by any of them in comparison to the reality. At the same time, matters which needed to be rectified would certainly be rectified. He was very particular in this regard until the very end.

A keen seeker wrote: "Hadrat Wālā, I am totally ready with my heart and soul for Allāh *taʿālā* to take away all my strength and the rest of my life, and give it to Hadrat Wālā so that Hadrat Wālā may receive the strength and power, and his blessings continue for a long time to come. I am also aware of the fact

that Allāh *taʿālā* does not do as I have described, but I am prepared for it with my heart and soul."

Hadrat Wālā dictated the following reply:

"What is the wisdom behind informing me of your readiness to do this? Futile statements do not make a good impression on me."

Hadrat Wālā then expressed his disapproval verbally [to those who were present] and said: "What was the need to make me hear this? Make duʿā'. When it is also known that Allāh *taʿālā* does not do this, then it is like a free act of kindness."

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A mujāz bayʿah wrote: "I do not seem to have that level of love for Allāh *taʿālā* which I ought to have." Hadrat Wālā replied: "It will be a day of mourning when you think you have acquired the desired level of love for Allāh *taʿālā* because the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* have themselves been continually saying that they do not have the desired level of love for Allāh *taʿālā*."

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The famous poet of India, Jigar Murādābādī, quoted five verses from his Persian *ghazal* which he liked a lot, and sent them a few days before Hadrat Wālā's demise. Just one verse can be recalled at present:

> Neither am I happy with the sound of music, with the company nor with the acquiring of wealth.

I cannot recall Hadrat Wālā's complete reply, but the sum of it was: "Your vibrant and colourful emotions gave life to my one dry emotion and prompted me to say a poem. It is not appropriate for me to quote it before an expert because it would appear like a claim. However, I am quoting it with the hope of benefit. Although it is not colourful, it is serious."

Hadrat Wālā wrote the poem as a main text and wrote the following on the margin:

خاتمة الجذبات، ولتكن اخر إلى الحالات

In other words, this zeal ought to put an end to all fervours and emotions. It ought to be the last of one's conditions.

The poem reads as follows:

> Neither am I delighted with the attractive word of the poet nor with the effect of such prose which are incomparable. I am only pleased with the slavery of Allāh *taʿālā* and the intense love of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Glory to Allāh! Look at the subtle manner in which Hadrat Wālā conveyed a message to the poet in line with the latter's condition, and also expressed his own condition!

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In short, Hadrat Wālā's acumen in training and rectification, and his investigative and analytical powers continued with the same fervour during his illness as they did when he was in good health. This used to really astound those who were present. Just two or three days before his demise, a close scholar wrote a lengthy, intricate academic objection to which Hadrat Wālā dictated to me a complete and referenced answer which satisfied the scholar.

There was some misunderstanding between Maulwī 'Umar Ahmad who was the son of Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib and his mother. Hadrat Wālā was quite disturbed by some of his shortcomings. When the two came to visit Hadrat Wālā during the final stages of his illness, he felt the need to resolve the matter. He dictated the resolution to the matter in his unique manner which took into consideration independence, affection and other essential considerations. Because of his extreme debility, he continued dictating to me in a soft voice while I continued recording it. I was astounded by its comprehensiveness while I was writing it.

Hadrat Wālā very quickly crossed all the essential points of the issue and got the two to pardon each other which resulted in extreme joy and happiness in their house. Later on, Hadrat Wālā said to me: "The thought occurred to me that they will be maligned for the rest of their lives, this is why I put an end to the dispute." This statement contained an explicit reference that life cannot be relied upon. Hadrat Wālā was very particular about abstaining from words of despair for the sake of his attendants and associates so that they do not break heart. What he meant is that if he passed away while the two had ill-feelings towards each other, they would be maligned for the rest of their lives. Contrary to his norm, he got both to

pardon each other. He wrote the following on a piece of paper and sent it to them via Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib:

هنيئا لكم، أنموذج هذه الآية: وجعلناها وابنها آية للعالمين

Congratulations to you! You are an example of this verse: We made her and her son a sign for the world.

It was meant to provide solace and comfort to Maulwī ʿUmar Ahmad and his mother.

Allāhu Akbar! Look at the level of Hadrat Wālā's affection and how he considered such matters even during this critical time. Normally, a person becomes engrossed in his own worries when he is in pain, he cannot worry about others, and those with whom he is displeased. We learn from this that his displeasure was based solely on rectificational reasons and not from the heart. However, even here he upheld the correct principles and essentials of the Sharīʿah without shifting away from them in the least. In fact, when Hadrat Wālā learnt of their joy via myself, he said: "Had I pardoned them without the fulfilment of the necessary preconditions, they would not have been so happy." Just look at Hadrat Wālā's level of insight into matters which need wisdom that right until the end of his life his focus remained on rational wisdoms, personal emotions and demands of the Sharīʿah. And he maintained each one on its level and within its limits. He often used to say: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I never allow my temperament to overpower my intellect, and my intellect to overpower the Sharīʿah."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of his sense of balance. This is what you call recognizing the ranks of people and the differences in their positions. Then look at his steadfastness: Apart from teaching this throughout his life, he demonstrated practically during the final moments of his life. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills. His level of prudence was of such a level that we used to see some people from distant places undertaking lengthy journeys to come to meet him without having obtained permission first. Sometimes, he would not give them permission to meet him. At the same time, he would say to his close associates: "The silly fellow makes my heart pain because his long journey went to waste. If I were to permit him, his error will neither be corrected in the proper manner nor will others learn a lesson.

Now he has been inconvenienced, for which he himself is responsible, but it has served as a lesson for many others." Someone said: "Some people come here for the sake of obtaining permission."

Among them was a student of ʿAlīgarh College who was studying M.A. or LLB. After a few questions and answers, Hadrat Wālā – contrary to his norm - called him inside. Hadrat Wālā used to give special consideration to those studying in colleges and universities in order to win them over and for other specific wisdoms. However, he would do this in line with his principles which he had laid down. Anyway, the man came in. Although Hadrat Wālā was extremely weak at the time, he addressed the man in a forceful tone: "You people are very cultured people while you consider us Mullās [Maulānās] to be uncultured. Now is it not uncultured to come to meet someone without obtaining his permission even if the person has some valid reason? And you can see that I have a valid excuse." The man said: "I had intended seeking permission after I come here." Hadrat Wālā asked: "Do you not see a difference in the two situations? One is to obtain permission before undertaking the journey. The other is to undertake such a long journey and then to seek permission after arriving here. Isn't there more freedom in the first situation and an imposition on others in the second situation?" The person could say nothing but admit his mistake.

Hadrat Wālā then warned him in his unique manner of rectification. Although Western-educated people are by and large very audacious and do not know how it is to succumb to others, it seemed as if Hadrat Wālā had total control over the person. Although his voice was feeble because of physical debility, his tone was powerful, authoritative and commanding. The man was so intimidated that he could not even provide answers to basic questions. I [the compiler] was silently dictating some answers to him.

Also during these final days he said with full authority and force: "Even if a thousand intelligent people were to present a proposition against the Sharīʿah, let alone other erudite ʿulamā', a useless fellow like myself will compel them to admit within five minutes that their proposition is senseless."

Hadrat Wālā was certainly correct and even demonstrated it. Great thinkers and experts in politics and civilization came

with heavy claims with a view to winning over Hadrat Wālā to their way of thinking, but had to go back defeated. This was the power of Allāh. Hadrat Wālā used to say: "I had the opportunity of conversing with many powerful people, people of authority, Englishmen, orators, writers, expert debaters, Aryans and others. Despite this, Allāh *taʿālā* never made me to feel ashamed before any of them. He always gave me the upper hand." He also used to say: "The main reason why I used to have the upper hand is that I speak the truth and I speak frankly. I express the truth once and then do not fall into discussions and debates. I have the intention that even if a child were to apprise me of my mistake, I will accept it."

"This is why I initiated *Tarjīh ar-Rājih*, i.e. whenever I learn of my mistake, I retract from it and publish it. I acquired this quality from the blessings of the company of Hadrat Maulānā Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* because this used to be observed all the time with him. Compared to other contemporaries, this quality was very clearly seen in him."

Hadrat Wālā never hesitated in saying the truth. However, he used to take full consideration of necessary considerations.

Maulānā Manzūr Ahmad Sāhib Nuʿmānī, the editor of *al-Furqān*, wanted to come from Bareilly in order to speak to Hadrat Wālā about his [Maulānā Manzūr Nuʿmānī's] participation in ʿAllāmah Maudūdī's movement and its compliance with the Sharīʿah. He sought permission to come to Hadrat Wālā and speak to him about this. Hadrat Wālā frankly replied: "Although there seems to be no reason to make an objection according to the Sharīʿah, my heart does not accept this movement. I will say the same thing to you verbally [if you were to come here]. Thus, you should not take the trouble of undertaking a journey for this purpose."

Eventually, the following Hadīth manifested itself:

اتقوا فراسة المؤمن فأنه ينظر بنور الله

Beware of the insight of a believer because he looks with the light of Allāh.

After remaining in this movement for some time, the Maulānā personally observed certain things which were against the Sharīʿah. We heard that he distanced himself from this movement.

Similarly there were many movements which appeared very attractive but were not devoid of prohibitions of the Sharī'ah. People tried everything to convince Hadrat Wālā to join them, but he was never influenced by them. he remained like a solid mountain and held on firmly to the truth. This strength remained with Hadrat Wālā despite severe oppositions. He used to say in this regard: "The truth has such power in it that if there is just one person in the entire world on the truth, and the rest of the world is opposed to him, he single-handedly considers himself weightier than the entire world."

A person who is conversant with Hadrat Wālā's life as a whole and bears this in mind will find that the above statement applies wholly and totally to Hadrat Wālā.

The above-related situations and conditions were written to demonstrate that even his severe, long-lasting and debilitating illness did not cause any major difference to any of the attributes and qualities which were peculiar to him. This is why we were deceived into thinking that he is recovering right until the end. Now can there be a more superior position of spiritual bestowal, propagation and a special place among the pious elders! The extent of love which Hadrat Wālā can have for all this cannot be estimated by another person.

A few years before his demise, he differed with the views and opinions of the senior scholars of the time. Hadrat Wālā was of the view that preoccupation in politics – whether correct in itself or baseless – would disturb the original objectives of the Madrasah if the students and 'ulamā' of Dār al-'Ulūm were to participate in them. This has been observed and experienced by most seniors for quite some time. However, on occasions of differences of this nature, it has always been Hadrat Wālā's practice to clearly and frankly express what he considered to be the truth. If what he said was accepted, well and good. If not, he distanced himself from the matter. He had a natural abhorrence for falling into disputes and arguments.

It was based on this old habit of his that he resigned from the post of patron of Dār al-'Ulūm. However, desiring the well-being of Dār al-'Ulūm, respect and love for it were flowing in his veins. He continued assisting it in whichever way he could. After all, the Madrasah is our mother. Even though we may have differences and complaints, it is with our brothers, not

with our mother. Thus, although he had formally resigned, he never held back from giving useful words of advice.

Incidentally, the destructive activities of the Congress came to the fore during Hadrat Wālā's final illness. When he heard that the Madrasah students and some of his associates were participants to a certain extent, and that there were differences among the administrators of Dār al-'Ulūm with regard to putting a stop to their participation, he was quite grieved by this because he considered it harmful to the Madrasah.

Incidentally, the principal of Dār al-'Ulūm had come to visit him. Despite Hadrat Wālā's lengthy illness and severe debility, he delivered a detailed talk in which I was also present. It was delivered outside the house of his second wife, while he was sitting on his bed. It was filled with golden principles on the subject of education, training and rectification. Unfortunately, it was not penned at the time and I cannot recall its details at present. The essence of the talk was: In the light of the Qur'ān, my life-long experiences and the honour of being in the company of certain elders, the point which I understood to be most advantageous to the Madrasah is that the madāris and its associates must remain totally aloof from current politics. They must not keep away from party politics alone, but from everything that would interfere with their educational programme. This is irrespective of how praiseworthy or beneficial that thing may be in itself.

Our elders always prohibited students from bay'ah and occupation in the Tarīqah during their student days notwithstanding the importance of it. Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* would never accept bay'ah from a student until he completes his studies. How, then, can participation in a political or national movement be tolerated?

Hadrat Wālā spoke in this vein for about one hour. The principal listened attentively to the talk and accepted it word for word. He said: "I will try my utmost to do this." Hadrat Wālā was overjoyed, made du'ā' for him and the assembly ended.

Subsequently, Hadrat Wālā was waiting to see some reforms in the Madrasah in this regard. Contrary to his habit, he would ask visitors about conditions there. However, he did not hear of any new measures. In fact, an article was published from the

Madrasah which Hadrat Wālā considered to be contentious and disapproved of it.

Quite some time passed. In the meantime, Hadrat Wālā's health deteriorated and he became extremely weak. He would be overtaken by drowsiness most of the time. The principal came to visit him again on 29 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1362 A.H. Despite his debility, he made a point of speaking again and called for certain close associates including Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib, Maulānā Jamīl Ahmad Sāhib, Deputy Sajjād ʿAlī Sāhib and myself. He said: "I would like to present my last and final opinion with regard to the Deoband Madrasah before all of you so that there is no possibility of incorrect statements being attributed to me later on."

When all these personalities together with the principal assembled at the appointed time, Hadrat Wālā delivered a talk for about one and half hours. His voice was extremely soft because of his weakness. He summoned his audience to come close to him so that they could hear him. In fact, after commencing his talk, he took the precaution of asking if everyone could hear him. He was so weak that he had to place his cheek several times on his pillow. There was no limit to my astonishment when – despite his weakness and being on his death bed – he delivered such a detailed, complete, referenced and continuous talk with an academic prelude, while taking emotions into consideration as though he was writing a book.

From among the points which he mentioned in his prelude was that he said: "I am ill for quite some time and there is no guarantee of life. I would like to express my thoughts very clearly and frankly about the Deoband Madrasah because the Deoband Madrasah is not something which I can leave behind in this world without expressing my final view about it. I am saying this so that later on no group must be able to say: "He was in agreement with us."

Hadrat Wālā's final view in this regard was:

> The Deoband Madrasah must remain totally aloof from politics. This was the way of our elders. They considered it extremely detrimental to focus on anything else while one is studying. It is clear that the actions of the teachers leave an indelible mark on the students. It is therefore essential for the

Madrasah teachers – especially for the sake of students – to stay away from politics. It is noticed that when teachers turn their attention to other matters, it affects their teaching. There is also a dire need for a group that is totally devoted to the service of knowledge of Dīn. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَلَّذِيْنَ إِنْ مَّكَّنّٰهُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ وَأَمَرُوْا بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ط وَلِلّٰهِ عَاقِبَةُ الأُمُوْرِ

Those whom, when We give them power in the land, they establish salāh, give zakāh, enjoin good and prohibit evil. In Allāh's hands is the final outcome of all events.[1]

It becomes clear from this that religious acts are the essential objectives; politics and jihād are not essential objectives; they are means for the establishment of Dīn. This is why Dīn was given collectively to all the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* but not politics and jihād. These were given where there was a need for them. This is always the case with means, i.e. they are resorted to when needed. Someone might feel that another verse contains a different message, i.e. Dīn is the means while establishing power in the land and politic administration are the objectives. The verse reads:

وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ص وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِيْنَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضٰى لَهُمْ

Allāh has promised those who have īmān from among you and who did good deeds that He shall make them leaders in the land as He had made leaders those who were before them. He shall establish for them their religion which He chose for them.[2]

Here, īmān and good deeds are laid down as preconditions for authority in the land. This shows that political authority is the fundamental objective.

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[1] Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 41.
[2] Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 55.

The answer to this objection is that political authority and power are promised if īmān and good deeds are found. The establishment and power of Dīn are mentioned as sequential results. Thus, in the presence of Dīn, political authority and power came into existence but this does not mean that the promise is the objective. Look at the following verse:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرةَ وَالإِنْجِيْلَ وَمَآ أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ لأَكَلُوْا مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ

Had they established the Taurāh and Injīl and that which was revealed to them from their Sustainer, they would have eaten from above them and from below their feet.[1]

In the case where the Taurāh, Injīl and Qur'ān are established – i.e. practising on the teachings of the Qur'ān – Allāh *taʿālā* promises expansion in sustenance. Now can anyone claim that this [expansion in sustenance] is the objective of Dīn? In the same way, in the presence of īmān and good deeds, Allāh *taʿālā* promises power, political authority and so on. This is the consequence of īmān and good deeds, and not the objective, which we can also refer to as the goal.

Anyway, it becomes clear that when it comes to politics and religion, we can say that political authority is the means while religion is the fundamental objective but this does not mean that political authority is not desirable at all. I want to demonstrate its position and status, i.e. it is not the fundamental objective while the establishment of religion is the fundamental objective.

Based on this, it is my view that there has to be a group which is occupied solely and purely in the preservation of religion and imparting of Dīnī knowledge. This group can only be the administrators of the madāris. This is why it is my firm view that students must not be allowed to get

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[1] Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 66.

> caught up with politics. If they become engrossed in such matters, their education will be discarded and even their rectification and reformation will not be realized. Consequently, they have developed liberal ideas ever since they have been made to get involved in politics. This has resulted in you people [madrasah authorities] always worrying about them and fearing them. I said this several times before and am saying it again but I do not see any signs of its acceptance. The article which has been published on your behalf (referring to the reply to Maulānā Shabbīr Ahmad Sāhib 'Uthmānī's speech) does not show any renunciation of politics from the Madrasah side. Rather, it seems to support politics. Furthermore, this article has created a type of contest [or debate] which has evil consequences on our mutual relationships.

Hadrat Wālā added:

> Whatever I said was not to put you in a corner. Rather, I myself am forced to say it so that my way and my view does not become murky and confused. I have always preserved this so much so that I even expressed my views to my senior and respected teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Deobandī *rahimahullāh* [referring to Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan], because I felt that it would be treacherous to conceal my views before him. Obviously, if I could tolerate confusion about my views, I would have done it before Hadrat [Shaykh al-Hind]. Now there is no reason for it.

Unfortunately this entire lecture could not be completed because I only noted what I could recall. On hearing this lecture, Janāb Maulānā Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib, the principal of Dār al-'Ulūm [Deoband], expressed his readiness to act in accordance with what Hadrat Wālā said. Hadrat Wālā expressed his joy and affection and advised him saying: "If you are unable to criticize this way of action in the Dār al-'Ulūm, you must at least announce your personal view clearly and frankly." The principal promised to do this and the assembly ended.

The tiredness caused by this speech increased Hadrat Wālā's original debility. However, after resting for a short while, he took a pen and wrote down this announcement which, while it expressed the truth, also took into consideration the position of the Principal and all other matters which deserved consideration. He added: "I stated that Maulwī Tayyib will be fatigued by this announcement, this is why I wrote it myself. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, it has been written and it will not be difficult for him to publish it." Hadrat Wālā also laughed and said: "Had the Principal Sāhib spent the entire day, he would probably not have been able to write like this." Hadrat Wālā handed over the manuscript of the announcement to the Principal. Unfortunately this announcement could not be published.

To sum up, Hadrat Wālā continued conveying his written and spoken blessings during his five-year long illness. Whether he was in Lucknow, Sahāranpūr or Thānah Bhawan, we continually heard his impressive and fervent statements. He also conducted lengthy assemblies of instruction which left us astounded. This is because it is extremely far-fetched for such a chronically ill patient to bear so much of toil. Consequently, he used to feel very tired afterwards, but at the same time he could not feel at ease without conveying his teachings.

When a few doctors tried to stop him, he said: "If I cannot render any service at all, what is the need for me to remain alive?" Hadrat Wālā used to experience contentment from serving Dīn. Thus, if he was stopped from it, he would feel extremely discomforted. Based on his special temperament, he considered this prohibition from the doctors to be harmful and not beneficial. This really was the case with him.

A prohibition of this nature was issued to him on one occasion. Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī, with whom Hadrat Wālā had a special bond, came one day. Hadrat Wālā called for him without letting those who were nursing him come to know of it. This was solely out of Hadrat Wālā's desire to convey and propagate the teachings of Islam. Hadrat Wālā had stopped going to the Khānqāh for quite some time. However, he would go to the nearby sitting area for the sake of the seekers. He would bear a lot of fatigue to reach there, suffer many hardships, and reach there totally out of breath. As per his old habit, he would offer salām to all who were present the moment

he arrived. He would then dictate replies to letters and address those who were present by enlightening them with his statements.

He said this quite often: “Although the distance to this sitting area is very short, it is like death for me to reach here. After reaching, it takes me extremely long to get my breath back. My knees do not support me. If I have to get up after sitting down, it takes me very long and I do not have the courage to do it.” In addition to this, his feet used to be swollen most of the time. Hadrat Wālā would not pay any attention to his swelling or other impediments. If anyone reminded him of them, he would reply: “My treatment is in the hands of expert and affectionate doctors. Recognition of my conditions is in the hands of intelligent attendants. Why, then, should I unnecessarily worry about all these things?”

Hadrat Wālā’s attitude in this regard made us feel that he was resorting to all this treatment merely because we are in this world of cause and effect. As for the effects and results, his focus was solely on Allāh *taʿālā*. If the doctor were to explain to him in the light of medical evidence or benefit, he would stop him saying: “I have no need for it. What do I know about all these things? I have, nevertheless, confidence in you.”

On one occasion he was expressing his frustration over a certain medicine or certain precaution which he had to take. He said: “What’s there if it does not benefit, I will return to my abode [the Hereafter]. It will be good, I will be leaving behind this world of affliction. There is nothing but affliction here.” Even from this statement, Hadrat Wālā’s temperament with regard to this world of affliction is demonstrated as is demonstrated from a letter of consolation which he had written and which will soon be presented to the reader.

Although Hadrat Wālā used to express his frustration with medicines and precautions, he was extremely considerate of his doctors and would diligently adhere to their guidelines as much as possible. If he felt like eating something, he would never eat it without showing it to them or making them taste it. If he had to change his doctor, he would write a most affectionate and subtle letter which would not offend the [dismissed] doctor in the least and would not embarrass him in the case where he had to revert to him again.

Hadrat Wālā used to say: “It is not wrong to change a doctor, but it smacks of disregard to the medical field to interfere with the course of one’s treatment.” A doctor became offended by the words of a certain relative who was nursing Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā wrote to the doctor in such a way that he was won-over immediately. Hadrat Wālā said to us jokingly: “I wrote a taʿwīdh to bring him under my control, but in the Urdu language.” Hadrat Wālā started suffering from quick bouts of diarrhoea for just over two months. This is why he also stopped coming to the sitting area. However, special associates had the honour of meeting him individually after obtaining formal permission from him. Towards the end, we could only look at him [without conversing with him] because he was in a state of drowsiness most of the time. People would sit for hours looking at him sadly. If he suddenly woke up, he would express his apology by saying: “I was never one to keep silent, but what can I do, my eyes are just closing.” Deputy Sajjād Sāhib said: “Hadrat’s tongue has spoken so much that it has filled the world with truths and spiritual discourses.”

Hadrat Wālā used to say about his drowsiness: “This is also a mercy from Allāh *taʿālā* because when I am drowsy, I do not feel the pain of my illness.” This has always been Hadrat Wālā’s condition, i.e. he used to express thanks to Allāh *taʿālā* under every condition and situation. Even when in pain and discomfort, he would find an angle which is worthy of gratitude.

A neighbour could not pass urine so it was drained through a catheter which caused him excruciating pain. On the other hand, Hadrat Wālā had the ailment of the constant need to pass urine. His severe weakness caused him immense fatigue and tiredness to get up and go to the toilet repeatedly. However, he used to say: “I pass urine and I thank Allāh *taʿālā* that it is coming out easily without the need for a catheter. Although I am discomforted by having to get up repeatedly, I am grateful that it has not ceased to flow out. The ability to pass urine is also a mercy.” In short, Hadrat Wālā never developed any complaint in his heart against any illness.

He used to reply in unique ways to those who asked him about his health and wellbeing. His replies neither caused trepidation in the person’s mind nor did it leave him unconcerned. He said: “If I were to merely write that I am feeling well while I am not, it

is as if I totally disregarded the person who inquired, and this could cause him to be offended. Furthermore, it is his right for me to tell him about my health. Obviously, not in a manner that would leave him worried." The following are examples of the replies which he wrote: (1) "I am healthy among sick people, but ill among healthy people." (2) "My illness has decreased but my weakness has increased." (3) "I am as you had seen me before leaving." There were many other ways in which he replied to queries about his health.

I cannot recall at present, but most of them were very subtle. I just recalled another example: "My mind is fine but my stomach is not." Eventually when Hadrat Wālā became totally helpless, he wrote a rough note and gave it to his scribe and said to him: "Now when anyone asks about my health, you must write this reply to all: 'I am well, I am making du'ā'.'" The following reply must be written to those who write detailed letters: "I am ill and do not expect to recover within one month. The reply to your letter will be written after one month." Subsequently this is what was written on the letters.

The attendants were always prohibited from informing anyone that he was extremely ill. Outside attendants generally did not even know of Hadrat Wālā's real condition, and this caused them much disappointment. In short, Hadrat Wālā lived a unique life of interaction and non-interaction.

Visitors and local residents would sit for hours under the canopy outside with the hope of being informed that they could catch just a glimpse of Hadrat Wālā, but there were times when they did not get even this much of an opportunity. Most of them would take solace from just being able to sit there even though they were not given permission to go and meet him. A crowd of people would always be present. There were those who were given permission, but this was only in the beginning and only to ask one or two questions about his health and so on. They would get the replies to their questions from the interpreter who was seated with Hadrat Wālā. Hadrat Wālā would then be involuntarily overtaken by drowsiness.

Despite Hadrat Wālā's physical condition, it was impossible for any change to come into his organizational fastidiousness. The notes and letters of newcomers and residents of the Khānqāh would be strictly presented to him. He would personally reply to them through questions and answers. He would give

permission to some, refuse permission to others, give permission with certain conditions, and so on. He was so particular in this regard that he would even instruct where a certain person is to be seated, and then ensure that his instructions are followed.

A few eminent 'ulamā' with a few friends came to visit Hadrat Wālā just days before his demise. This was a repeated visit. There was insufficient place on the veranda, so some of those who were present were asked to go outside to make place. We got up and went outside. Some people remained seated. Hadrat Wālā took an account by asking who went outside and who remained seated. He then asked some of those who were outside to come inside, and some of those who were inside to go outside. From those for whom the places were vacated, some were asked to sit inside and others to sit outside. Hadrat Wālā did this by asking each person by name. He did not have the strength to raise his head and check for himself, so he would take the person's name and instruct him where to sit. When everyone sat at their appointed places, he said: "No one must have any misgivings of my giving preference to some over others without any reason for preference because apart from virtue and merit, there are other reasons for asking certain people to sit outside and certain people to sit inside." He then asked: "Is there anyone who feels offended?" Everyone responded in the negative. Hadrat Wālā then addressed the eminent 'ulamā' who came to visit him: "I am now permanently ill and in this condition. Therefore, instead of coming here repeatedly, you should rather make du'ā' for me from wherever you are."

Just look at his considerations and arrangements despite his weak state! Even some of his khulafā' were sometimes given permission to go inside while others were refused permission. Hadrat Wālā explained the reason for this: "I want my beloveds to become accustomed to all types of treatments. Those who do not receive permission must not feel offended." In short, Hadrat Wālā did not discard correct principles under any condition. The concern for educating, instructing and serving Dīn had become a prevailing condition in him. Although he had reached a lofty station, the effects of his condition were prominent in this station. It was as though his condition itself and its effects had become his lofty station.

Someone presented an objection to him about his refusal to accept bayʿah. The person said that this refusal is against the statement of the elders who said: “A shaykh must be most desirous about proliferating the path.” H̲ad̲rat Wālā replied: “Is there anyone as desirous than me in desiring the proliferation of the path? Our entire day and night are spent in this and nothing else. As for bayʿah, it is not even among the essentials of the path. Furthermore, there are certain prerequisites for it. I ensure that they are fulfilled. As for the fundamentals and subsidiary matters of the path, these I have proliferated so much that it was probably not done for centuries in this manner.”

A few days before his demise he spoke about some unique topics and addressed me saying: “Khwājah S̲āh̲ib! These are points which are to be noted. Khwājah S̲āh̲ib! You will not hear them again because I see no importance given to them by others.” H̲ad̲rat Wālā then quoted the following saying of Maulānā Fad̲l H̲aq S̲āh̲ib Khayrābādī:

> The *Qānūn* and *Shifā* will become widows after me.[1]

He then read the following couplet of Maulānā ʿAbd as-Samīʿ Baydal:

> Where will you find a deplorable Baydal! Just be hospitable to him for a few days.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā then said: “When I went to Kānpūr, I asked Maulānā ʿAbd as-Samīʿ S̲āh̲ib to deliver a lecture. Although he used to conduct maulūd gatherings, I knew he delivers absolutely correct lectures; he does not interpolate them with any fabrications. This is why I requested him to deliver a lecture.[2] He was an excellent poet. He was a student of Ghālib. He had quoted some of his own couplets in that lecture, one of which was the one which I quoted just now and which I remembered.”

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[1] These are books on medicine and philosophy.

[2] Glory to Allāh! Look at how he practised on:

خذ ما صفا ودع ما كدر. أنظر إلى ما قال ولا تنظر إلى من قال

Accept what is pure, and cast aside what is dirty. Look at what is said and not at who is saying it.

Look at how he proved his broad-mindedness and the absence of extremism in him!

Hadrat Wālā was certainly correct when he said: "You will not hear them [these intricate points] again." Who can explain such facts and spiritual sciences now? Where can we read and hear such writings and lectures? After all, an erudite scholar of his calibre is born after centuries. Whenever I think of this statement: "Khwājah Sāhib! You will not hear them again", my heart is reduced to bits, I feel real regret and I cry over my defective pen. However, since it is difficult to review Hadrat Wālā's statements and he – out of his informality with me – addresses me most of the time and I am unable to pen down what he is saying at the time, therefore, despite my extreme regret, I was excused. Despite his critical condition and my excuse, he told me that I must sometimes present a written statement [of his] to him so that he could review it.

A person had noted a lengthy statement and presented it to him. He reviewed it immediately and returned it to the person directly. After all, Hadrat Wālā was like a machine when it came to his work. No sooner a task came before him, his entire mind would be focused on it and he would remain fully occupied with it until he completes it as quickly as possible. In fact, in most cases he will complete it there and then and hand it over to the person. Very often he would address this worthless fellow saying: "Look Khwājah Sāhib! I do not take up a task and leave it one side. I take it on immediately, cross all its stages and complete it there and then."

May Allāh *taʿālā* give my defective pen the inspiration to make up for my shortcoming in this regard by reviewing and editing the manuscripts of Hadrat Wālā's statements which have been lying unattended for quite some time. I need Allāh's special help more so because Hadrat Wālā is no longer with us to review and check the work. Hadrat Wālā used to say: "If it is difficult to review and check all the statements because they are so old, the lectures and statements must be reviewed and edited, and published as miscellaneous statements." Although it is difficult to do this now, I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to give me the courage, even if it means working with just one or two statements a day. This in itself will be a boon. To sum up, Hadrat Wālā was very particular about completing a task as quickly as possible. So much so that even on his last day, he asked his house people to fetch the post from the box and to place the letters in front of him. After looking at the addresses,

he said: “You may take them away, they are not from people whom I know.”

A hand-delivered letter from one of his special associates was brought. Hadrat Wālā was feeling very weak and drowsy at the time. Despite this, he opened it with his own hands and in exactly the same way as he used to, i.e. in such a way that the glued section of the envelope does not get torn. It took him quite some time to open it in this manner because his weak fingers were trembling and some effects of drowsiness were still on him.

Those who were sitting nearby were distressed and felt that they should open the letter themselves so that Hadrat Wālā is saved from this burden. But no one dared because as far as possible, Hadrat Wālā never took help from anyone in carrying out any task. If anyone hastened before him to help him, he would express his disapproval and stop the person. Although it was extremely difficult for him to walk before he could be bed-ridden and had to virtually drag his feet, he would not take support from anyone. However, he would request one of his workers to walk with him so that if he was to fall, he could take support from him. When he became totally helpless and could not move around at all, he would take support from others to sit up. If the attendants or workers were unable to carry out a task according to his wishes, he would express his disapproval by saying: “I had always been doing everything with my own hands. However, Allāh *taʿālā* has made me dependent on you, so I have no alternative. You people do the work so haphazardly that I do not even feel like asking you to do it.”

If he saw any attendant or worker carrying out tasks related to his relieving himself, he would feel extremely embarrassed. This was especially so when his two wives used to come to help him to relieve himself. He would repeatedly say: “I am most embarrassed at having to take this help from you.” Both wives fulfilled the duty of serving him to the full. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them well and keep their affectionate shadows above us for a long time. Āmīn. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

Hadrat Wālā remained enthusiastic about teaching and instruction to the very end. It was as though he spent his entire life in this. Why should this not be the case? After all, Allāh *taʿālā* created him for this purpose.

Janāb Maulānā ʿAbd al-Bārī Sāhib Nadwī and Maulānā Masʿūd ʿAlī Sāhib Nadwī came to spend a few days with Hadrat Wālā. In addition to the after zuhr assembly which they attended, Hadrat Wālā would call them to his house after fajr, ʿasr and maghrib. He said: "I want the useful points which I know to be conveyed to the correct addressees. I did not have the inspiration to do good, someone else may be able to benefit from it." He also used to say: "This is not a big favour from me because I have a personal motive in it as well. That is, my time passes when I am talking to my beloved associates. If not, I will just lie wasting away my time due to my illness."

Although Janāb Maulānā Muhammad Sulaymān Sāhib Nadwī had intended to come and present himself before Hadrat Wālā, he could not do so because of certain impediments. He sent a message that he will come later on. When Hadrat Wālā used to deliver beneficial talks, he would think of Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Sāhib Nadwī and say: "If he was also here, I would not have the burden of talking and I would have been saved from additional fatigue." When Sayyid Sāhib [Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī] came later on, Hadrat Wālā was constantly in a state of drowsiness. Sayyid Sāhib was deprived of listening to Hadrat Wālā's statements and Hadrat Wālā's regret proved to be true.

Although he was extremely weak, Hadrat Wālā continued his programme before ʿasr just one day before his demise. His voice was barely audible and he was speaking very slowly in small fragments at a time. I can recall just one thing which he said. He mentioned some of his relatives and said: "All I want from Allāh *taʿālā* is for my relatives to surpass me thousands of times. Unfortunately there is no one who has come forward as yet." He then spoke in fragments again and said: "I always considered myself to be worse than and inferior to grazing animals. However, through the blessings of serving Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, I was blessed with something on the very first day. Hadrat gave me a glad tiding which I never disclosed because I will become a target of verbal abuses. He mentioned many senior personalities by name regarding whom I do not consider myself to be even equal to the dust on their shoes, and said with reference to me: He has surpassed them as well. I always considered this to be a glad tiding for the future because my condition – till the present – has never been worthy of it."

Even after this, Hadrat Wālā continued making statements periodically. However, the above statement – in the form of a complete and continuous statement, filled with fervour and impact – was his last statement which sounded like a statement made in good health. Yes, he was not flowing in his words due to his weakness. He was uttering a few words at a time, but they were uttered with genuine fervour, and filled with impact which entered the depths of the heart.

After quoting this last statement, I now relate the conditions surrounding the day of his demise. This day commenced at maghrib time a day after he made the above statement. Although I recall many other conditions and situations which occurred before this, how much can I continue writing? I am wilfully moving them out of my mind and stopping the inundation of memories.

Conditions On The Day Of His Demise[1]

The day of Sunday passed and the night of Monday commenced. No real change took place in Hadrat Wālā's condition. Although he was feeling a bit constipated, he did relieve himself a few times and was overcome by drowsiness. On Monday morning he was able to relieve himself fully. He therefore said in a satisfied tone: "Today I was able to relieve myself fully. The discomfort which I had been feeling due to the partial motions is now gone. Even the swelling which had reduced tremendously after the bouts of diarrhoea had come down completely on the last day. We realized that his entire body was just bones and nothing else.

The fact that he relieved himself properly, the discomfort which he was experiencing was gone and the swelling had come down brought joy and solace to everyone. However, it was short-lived and was replaced by worry because the major bouts of diarrhoea which followed wasted away his body parts. However, despite the weakness and retrogression, the discomfort and drowsiness which he had been experiencing disappeared completely. When Hakīm 'Abd al-Majīd Sāhib Lucknowī came to check on Hadrat Wālā after zuhr, and Hadrat Wālā explained his condition to him in detail and in a forceful tone, the doctor expressed his satisfaction and said: "This bout of

[1] 16 Rajab al-Murajjab 1362 A.H./20 July 1943.

diarrhoea has proved to be beneficial to Hadrat. His drowsiness has disappeared completely, his mind has opened up and his speech is flowing. Instead of getting weaker, even his pulse has strengthened.” Hadrat Wālā spoke to the doctor and addressed us about illness and treatment for quite some time as though he was a healthy person.

He said to me: “I tried all forms of treatment but did not benefit from any of them. Rather, my condition is retrogressing by the day. What should I do now?” I said: “The only alternative is to go to Delhi for treatment. However, the bouts of diarrhoea and your debility make it impossible for you to travel.”

Anyway, the conversations hovered around this topic. During the course of these conversations or before them, Hadrat Wālā complained about the quantity of medicine and the number of times which he had to take them. This had always been his complaint and he used to constantly request his doctors to decrease both [the quantity and the number of times]. When he reverted to his special doctor, Janāb Hakīm Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib Gangohī, he noted the following preconditions for him:

1. The medicine must not be prescribed for more than two times a day.
2. The quantity of medicine must not be too much.
3. The medicine must not be something which has to be eaten. It must either be able to be swallowed or drunk. In other words, it must either be in the form of tablets or a liquid. These are the three conditions with regard to my medicines.
4. As for my food, there must be sufficient flexibility in it so that it can be constantly changed in the beginning.

As for the bitterness of the medicine or excessive precautions regarding my food intake, these are not difficult for me. If the above considerations are not possible, I feel the illness to be easier to accommodate than the difficulties of the treatment. Was salām.

The doctor took all the above into consideration and prepared the medicine after thinking about them carefully, and taking the quantity and number of times into consideration. However, Hadrat Wālā was so fastidious that he was still disturbed and could not bear taking them. The medicines were then prepared

in the form of powders which were mixed in liquids and then presented to him, but these too would get stuck in his throat and result in nausea. Sometimes the urge to vomit would come immediately. Anyway, most of the time when anything reached his stomach – no matter how small and light – he would feel like vomiting.

Hadrat Wālā would address me on some of these occasions: "Khwājah Sāhib! Look at how weak my temperament is, yet people say that I have a strict temperament. What can I do? Allāh *ta'ālā* created my disposition in such a way that the slightest haphazard act has this effect on me which others cannot understand." Sometimes he used to say: "At first I exercise a lot of patience. When I can bear it no longer, I express the harm which it has caused me. People think that I am not forbearing, while I can say that I am the chief of the patient ones."

I had occasions of being with Hadrat Wālā at night. Only then did I realize how much he was affected by the slightest wrong. If there was the slightest crease or fold in his bed, he would feel it immediately with his feet. He would then gasp for breath as if he is being poked by thorns. He said to me on one occasion: "I am so conscious of creases in my bed that they feel like sticks which have been laid down by someone."

One day Hadrat Wālā said to me jokingly: "Tānā Shāh was fastidious by nature but I am Bānā Shāh. Bānā (the woof in weaving) is superior to tānā (the warp) because a fabric is considered a fabric because of it."

Even the sound made by turning over a page sounds heavy in his ears, causes him distress and he stops a person immediately. I have a leather wallet in my pocket. When I bend down, the leather makes a slight sound. This also causes him distress. I remove it from my pocket, keep it one side and then sit before him.

Medicines caused a lot of anxiety to Hadrat Wālā. He used to say: "When my medicines are brought before me, I feel I have to climb up [the steps] to be hanged." Similarly, Hadrat Wālā could not abstain from certain foods. Most of the doctors used to impose stringent precautions on him because his illness was severe. On the other hand, he could not eat something he did not like. He could not swallow such foods no matter how

hungry he felt. The doctors were forced to make exceptions. One day he was talking about medications and precautions, so he said in an irritable tone: “If I was a doctor, I would have exercised my judgement on the basis of the patient’s peculiar temperament and then provided him with ease. You people know that as regards the field which I am conversant with (i.e. tasawwuf), I took consideration of the temperaments and provided people with ease according to my judgement. Look at how beneficial it proved to be.”

Even on his last day he uttered some complaints of this nature and refused to take his medicine. I mustered some courage and said: “The Hakīm Sāhib himself is very particular about taking your fine temperament into consideration. However, he cannot turn a medicine into a non-medicine.” I then went into some details about the need to take one’s medicines. After listening to whatever I had to say, he said: “The reply to the reason for this is that my entire disposition does not accept it.”

Anyway, Hadrat Wālā speaking in this manner on that day gave everyone the impression that he is recovering, as had been the case for most of the time before this. However, since the morning he was saying: “Today life has left my hands and legs. One day before, after the swelling on the forepart of my right foot came down, I have been experiencing a throbbing pain there.” After zuhr he began experiencing shortness in breath. He had suffered from this many times before, so I thought that it was the same as before which would leave him soon. I did not know that his breath was leaving him and that it was the prelude to his journey to the Hereafter.

I said to Hadrat Wālā that he had complaints of shortness of breath previously and – Allāh willing – he will recover from it. He said: “I never experienced so much of pain in my whole life.” He uttered the word “Allāh” in such a manner that I felt that he was in real pain although the effects of restlessness were not visible. Throughout his illness he was never restive or restless because he used to remain like a mountain in his steadfastness. He would only express his pain and discomfort verbally for the sake of treatment. He bore this severe and lengthy illness with real patience and satisfaction. Moreover, he never opted for rest and comfort. He spent his entire life like a student, bearing the difficulties of life although all the means of comfort were available to him. He used to say: “I may be

delicate in my temperament, but – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I am not delicate in my body.”

Apart from the time for his siesta, he used to remain seated on a bed with a wooden base [with no mattress]. And that too, he used to sit on the width of the bed and not its length so that he would not be able to stretch out his legs. Whenever the doctors and his attendants offered to provide him with a bed, he replied: “I do not find comfort on it.” Throughout his illness, I rarely saw him stretching out his legs. He used to contract his legs most of the time. Even when he was lying down, his legs would be contracted and upright. They would fall repeatedly when he was overcome by slumber. At night he would rest his head on a large pillow so that his head remained high. People like us will not even fall asleep if we were to use such a pillow. Furthermore, only his back would rest against the pillow while his head used to be above it. When he felt drowsy, his head would fall back. He would be in a state of slumber for a long time before he fell asleep.

When we used to tell him to sleep in a more comfortable position, he would respond: “No, there is a lot of enjoyment in this.” When other ways of resting were suggested to him, he would reply: “It is good to get into the habit of hardship. To become habituated to comfort is not good or else a person will experience discomfort later on.” A large mark had appeared on his right shoulder and his skin had become hard because since his student days he had the habit of resting his right shoulder on the ground when writing.

When the sunlight used to come close to his bed in his house veranda, the attendants would offer to drag it away from the sunlight. Hadrat Wālā would reply: “The sunlight is moving away now.” When it was extremely hot, it was suggested to him that the bed be moved from the veranda to inside the house. He replied: “The rains are coming soon.” In short, he spent all the seasons – summer, winter, monsoon – on the veranda. This, despite the fact that his temperament was so perceptive that the slightest change in the weather used to affect him. Eventually, his internal body heat had become so less that he would not feel hot even on the hottest days. In fact, he used to keep himself covered with a sheet. Whereas a few days before, his internal body heat was so intense that if I had to touch his back I would feel as though he has a very high temperature.

Hadrat Wālā had extremely simple goods. People would give him the best of items but in most cases he would not use them himself. He had a coarse sheet on his bed which I wanted to change with my own sheet. He said: "No, this one stays nice and warm." An old woman presented a carpet to him. He declined by saying: "I do not want my assembly area to look intimidating. Everyone must have the courage to come here. Furthermore, I will have to take measures to take care of the carpet and ensure that marks and blemishes do not fall on it. Thus, instead of it being of service to me, I will have to render services to it."

In short, he always lived a simple student-life and remained engrossed in his work. Whenever he was observed, he was always seen engrossed in some work or the other.

In addition to the mental and physical hardships which he bore, he also had to suffer medical hardships. His delicate temperament caused him to suffer severely from the inappropriate actions of people by day and night. He said with reference to this on one occasion: "Apart from my illness, these worries and concerns have also made me ill. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless me with complete and eternal rest." Āmīn.

His spiritual contentment was never affected by his medical anguish. On one occasion he became angry over something which he disapproved of. Due to his debility and illness, I expressed my hesitance so he said as a way of consolation: "No. Laziness is removed from such matters and one's disposition is sharpened. It results in quickness of apprehension which then turns to contentment." This was perceived to the very end. Although laughing and joking had ceased totally in the end, his sharpness and quickness remained as they had always been.

Three days before [his demise], an attendant wrote a note expressing his joy and gratitude over the pardon which was mentioned previously. Hadrat Wālā wrote the following line of verse:

> His mercy is purely unconditional.

The text which he wrote thereafter was not read because his fingers were not moving at the time. This was probably the last thing which he wrote. Although on the day of his demise he had asked for a pen so that he could sign the orders, the ink of the pen flowed down because he was lying down. He could not

sign them himself so he asked a relative to sign them. His fervour to do work by himself remained strong until the very end. His state of relaxedness was such that he used to say: "If someone were to refer to me as an old man, I would be offended. I am not old. I feel absolutely young. But then I think to myself that the person is right. If I am not old at this age, when will I ever be old? Am I still so young?" In reality, Hadrat Wālā's Dīnī enthusiasm and fervour remained until the end by virtue of his spiritual strength. In fact, it increased by the day.

The thought occurred to some of Hadrat Wālā's relatives that in addition to the noise and clamour that is normally heard in a house, Hadrat Wālā has to overhear other conversations. He has a very investigative disposition. He likes to investigate and dissect every matter. If a matter is not in line with his investigative level, it will agitate him. In fact, some of the people will become agitated by his questioning. It is possible that as per the Hadīth:

انتم اعلم بامور دنیاکم

You know best about your worldly matters.

Some people may not consider his investigation to be necessary. When Allāh *taʿālā* creates a person for a particular task, He places the element for that task naturally in the person. When an element is placed in a person for a specific service which he has to render, it will be manifested in a general manner. For example, if the element of investigation and inquiry was not placed naturally in Hadrat Wālā, he would not have been able to bring to the public domain the thousands of intricate academic, practical and Dīnī points which he produced. Since this element was naturally placed in him, it was inevitable for it to manifest itself in not only Dīnī matters but in worldly matters as well. Consequently, Hadrat Wālā used to sometimes interfere in minor and trivial issues of his house. In reality it used to be a reasonable interference. When people used to hear its details, they had to acknowledge and accept what he said. However, all this used to cause unnecessary agitation and fatigue to Hadrat Wālā. In order to save him from all this, it crossed the minds of some of his house people that instead of keeping him in the female section of the house, he should be kept in the male section which was right next to the female section. The moment he heard this

proposition, he said: “Lā haula wa lā qūwwata! Do people think that I am a royal statue?! How sad! Even my beloveds have not recognized me.”

He used to say this quite often. In fact he most probably said a similar thing in his last statement the day before his demise. The fact of the matter is that Hadrat Wālā’s rank was so fine and intricate that it was extremely difficult to reach there. A few days before his demise, there was a seeker who was desirous of special treatment. Hadrat Wālā reprimanded him via me by saying: “One ought to obliterate one’s self completely.” He then added: “Although it is bad to give myself as an example, what can I do, I have to say it out of necessity. Do you not see my condition? You cannot see anything in me which would indicate to you that I am a dervish. This despite the fact that all these people who refer and revert to me must be doing it after considering me to be something. The most people can conclude about me after observing me is that I am educated, I have some brains, I am organized, and I am philosophical. As for having even a remote connection with Sufism, this cannot be seen by anyone. Thus, why should one not remain like this?”

Quite some time back, Hadrat Wālā said to me: “After entering the path, it is essential to change one’s conditions. However, it must be done gradually in such a manner that no one comes to know of it. Do not adopt any distinguished form which would unnecessarily cause people to look up to you and consider you to be a pious person.” Really, it was extremely difficult to recognize Hadrat Wālā and could not be done by anyone and everyone. In fact, those regarding whom it was assumed that they recognized him – by Allāh – they did not recognize him as he ought to be recognized. I recall one of my own couplets in this regard:

> Whatever people have understood of him is nothing, what could they understand about him. They must at least realize that they cannot fully understand him.

Why should this not be the case, after all it is extremely difficult to recognize the Sufi masters. Due to their total control over themselves, their condition appears like that of ordinary people.

The very same condition of presence [of Allāh *taʿālā*] remains all the time. When they have to turn their focus on the creation for the sake of conveying Dīn to them, their gaze is still focussed on Allāh *taʿālā*. Their focus on the creation does not prevent them from remaining focussed on Allāh *taʿālā*. This is similar to when a person can see his beloved in the mirror. Although he is also looking at the glass of the mirror, his focus is on the beloved. Moreover, the gaze of the Sufi masters is more on the supervision of the heart so that it does not become heedless.

In short, it is very difficult for us to identify the Sufi masters. It is even more difficult to recognize a genuine heir of the Prophets. People used to say with reference to the Chief of Prophets *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

مَا لِهٰذَا الرَّسُوْلِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِيْ فِي الْاَسْوَاقِ

What kind of Messenger is this who eats food and walks about in the market places?[1]

Who was an example of:

لَا تُلْهِيْهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَّلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللهِ

Men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the remembrance of Allāh.[2]

Who was a manifestation of:

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِيْ نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَّخِيْفَةً وَّدُوْنَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ

Continually remember your Sustainer in your heart with humility and awe, and without raising your voice. [Remember Him] by morning and evening.[3]

Whose condition is such that his heart is focused on Allāh *taʿālā* while his hand is extended, is focused and aloof at the same time, is spiritually in the presence of Allāh *taʿālā* while his physical activities do not prevent him from being conscious of Him.

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[1] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 7.
[2] Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 37.
[3] Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 205.

What can be said of the one who turned thousands of people into ascetics, into those who are constantly engaged in Allāh's remembrance and occupied in His worship while he himself does not appear to engage in a lot of remembrance nor in too much of worship!? Rather, he is always found to be engrossed in some sort of outward occupation. He is either writing a book, replying to letters, engaged in an academic discussion, making verbal statements, joking, cross examining someone, scolding and reprimanding another, bags of money which are entrusted to him are placed before him and he is taking account of them, small bottles are placed before him and notes are being pasted on them, things are being moved around and rearranged. His memory is so powerful that although his hands are occupied in all these tasks, his mind is focussed on intricate themes which are to be included in his book which he is writing at the moment, and his tongue is busy reading the *manzil*. Everyone can see all these outward actions, but no one knows what is transpiring in the heart, what it is occupied in, what spiritual actions are taking place and what spiritual progress he is making through these actions. Hadrat Wālā himself said: "The outward actions of a qalandar are few but his internal actions are numerous and much higher than his external actions. This is because incidents occur all the time, and his heart has a different interaction with Allāh *taʿālā* at the occurrence of each incident. This is an internal action which is unknown to others. This, despite the fact that he is continuing with his internal actions and making progress in that regard.

Although I have moved very far away from my objective, I will certainly mention some of Hadrat Wālā's spiritual actions which, had Hadrat Wālā not mentioned them by the way, blind people like us would never have come to know of them.

His loftiest and highest spiritual action and condition was that of obliteration and servitude which pervaded him with absolute severity all the time, and by which he was so affected that he used to often say: "I consider myself to be worse than dogs and pigs. If anyone does not believe me, I can take an oath and say it."

Allāh is the greatest! Look at the level of his humility. This is what you call genuine humility. Really, the one to whom Allāh's greatness is exposed will most certainly have this quality. A

person wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā and included the following line of verse:

> How marvellous is His grandeur and generosity and
> how strange is my meekness and humility.

He wrote in reply to it: “This verse shook me from head to toe. Could I obtain the entire poem?”

We can gauge from this incident the extent to which Allāh’s greatness and his own servitude was exposed to Hadrat Wālā. Only then could this verse which combines both conditions have had such an effect on him.

Here, read the following incident which is a greater proof in this regard. He confided in me on one occasion and spoke extremely softly. He said: “Although it is not appropriate for me to expose my condition, what can I hide from you? I am saying it on condition you do not mention it to anyone as long as I am alive. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, in the beginning I was convinced according to the Sharīʿah but could not understand it emotionally that although the greatness of Allāh *taʿālā* and matters of the Hereafter were exposed to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* – and that too matters of immense terror and fear – how did Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* converse and joke with his Companions? How was he able to interact with his wives? How was he able to carry out domestic tasks? How was he able to eat, drink and sleep? All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, I have now come to understand it emotionally as well and I realized that yes, it is possible; the two can be found together.” The supreme loftiness of this most special of conditions become clear.

An earthquake had struck the region of Bihar and many terrifying incidents occurred. Hadrat Wālā who possessed an extremely perceptive, soft and affectionate heart was severely grieved when he heard these incidents. There was a time when he used to even make duʿā’ for animals but then stopped it when he did not come across any texts [from Qur’ān and Hadīth] to support this practice. Together with his grief over the events in Bihar, he used to say: “I fear grieving too much lest it may affect my acceptance of Allāh’s decree. If the heart is not grieved by such events, one will not be fulfilling the rights of one’s fellow creatures. And if one grieves too much, he will be acting against the rights of the Creator. It is a very

perplexing situation where a person must neither trample the rights of the creation nor those of the Creator. It is certainly very difficult to remain steadfast on the straight path which is the path of moderation and which is presented in the physical form of the *pul s̲irāt̲*. However, when a person makes efforts in this direction, Allāh *taʿālā* helps him on every occasion and the severest of hardships become easy."

H̲ad̲rat Wālā related a similar incident with reference to his other *malfūz̲āt* just a few days before his demise. He said: "The grave of one Shāh Wilāyat S̲āh̲ib is here in Thānah Bhawan. He is from among the khulafā' of H̲ad̲rat Khwājah Bakhtiyār Kākī *rah̲imahullāh*. We have learnt from people of perception that he is a very high ranking man of spirituality. The practice of *ʿurs* is followed at his grave. During these occasions of *ʿurs*, my respected deceased father used to go out of his way to prepare special foods and send them there [to the grave]. People of the past were very enthusiastic about feeding others. The one who was in charge of the grave used to say: "This food which Munshī Jī [referring to my father] is sending will continue only for as long as he is living. His son will put an end to this practice." His prediction turned out to be true. When my father passed away and I had control over the finances, I put an end to the practice of sending food because I consider it to be a baseless custom. I saw a dream that night. There was a place where there were many solidly constructed graves. In other words, the entire place was a centre of bidʿah. I then heard a voice from the unseen. When I turned my attention to it, I heard the following couplet being recited:

> The workshop of love cannot be void of kufr. How would the fire be set alight if there was no Abū Lahab!

I could not see any person reciting it, it was merely a voice from the unseen. My eyes opened. This was a very difficult occasion and a severe test. If it was someone else, he would have slipped and would have started sending food to the *ʿurs*. Thousands and thousands of praises are due to Allāh *taʿālā* for having steered me during such a difficult time. He instilled the following interpretation and reality of the dream in my heart: It does not mean that I must disregard the Sharʿī despicability of this act. Rather, it is intended to direct me to the fact that together with its Sharʿī despicability, I must also look at its

conceptual beauty. Its conceptual beauty must not be disregarded completely. While abstaining from an evil act on the basis of its Sharʿī despicability, its conceptual beauty must also be borne in mind. It does not mean that its Sharʿī despicability must be disregarded on the basis of its conceptual beauty and a person must therefore commit the evil." H̲ad̲rat Wālā then said: "Maulānā Rūmī has given a very simple answer to a severe objection on the same subject. He was able to provide such a simple answer despite the inherent restrictions which we find in a poem. The objection is that it is obligatory to be pleased with the decree of Allāh while it is unbelief to be pleased with unbelief, whereas unbelief is also His decree. He answers this objection in the following couplet:

> When kufr is attributed to the Creator, Allāh *taʿālā*, then it is wisdom, and when attributed to us it is a disaster.

What this means is that unbelief is viewed from two angles, one is the creation of unbelief and the other is the act [or committing] of unbelief. When viewed as a creation, it is based on wisdom and has beauty in it because it is created by Allāh *taʿālā*. When viewed as an act, it is a calamity and repugnant because it is related to the servant and he is prohibited from committing it. Thus, the actual committing of unbelief is not a decree but decreed. On the other hand, its creation is a decree and it is obligatory on us to be content with Allāh's decree. It is not obligatory to be content with the decreed. It is as though unbelief has two directions, one towards the Creator. In other words, a person commits unbelief by his choice and action. This is a unique investigation into the issue of contentment with unbelief. The fact of the matter is that the sages, philosophers and ʿulamā' could not reach the point to where the gazes of the erudite Sufis reached. H̲ad̲rat Wālā then said: If I was a trader in firewood and grain, what facts and figures would have come to my mind? Obviously, I would only be thinking about firewood and grain. For the above themes to come in one's mind, it is essential for a person to empty his heart and mind from all matters related to this world."

After the above *malfūz̲*, H̲ad̲rat Wālā explained many other academic points. He then said to me: "Khwājah S̲āh̲ib! You will not hear these points again…" I had mentioned this in detail previously. These are H̲ad̲rat Wālā's last statements which he

made formally in an assembly and were penned by Muftī Muhammad Shafī' Sāhib Deobandī. They are quoted towards the end of this book under the title *Ashraf al-Malfūzāt fī al-Wafāt*. As for the last statements which were made just one day before his demise and which were quoted above, those were made to specific people. They were neither made in a general assembly nor were they recorded.

Hadrat Wālā said on one occasion: "Allāh *taʿālā* instilled a certain type of meditation in my heart. No matter what type of distress is experienced – whether physical or spiritual – I do not feel distressed to the point of restlessness. The meditation is this: Allāh *taʿālā* is also the absolute judge. Based on this, I am convinced that He will not act like a tyrant judge. Rather, His decision will be based on wisdom irrespective of whether we understand the wisdom behind it or not."

Glory to Allāh! This is also a perfect form of acceptance of Allāh's decree, and a most lofty form of continuous and beneficial internal action. Hadrat Wālā's aloofness from this world was of such a level that he said on several occasions: "I find myself all alone in the entire world. I feel as though there is only Allāh *taʿālā* and myself in the world, and no one else."

He also used to say: "I have love for all my beloveds and associates. However, my bond with them is not such that my heart is stuck to them. A bond of this nature should only be with Allāh *taʿālā* if He enables us."

Towards the end, Hadrat Wālā used to forget things quite a lot. On one occasion he placed an item somewhere and forgot where he had placed it. He was quite distressed. Someone showed him where it was. Hadrat Wālā said: "May Allāh reward you. I have now started to become forgetful." He then said with real fervour: "I don't mind if Allāh causes me to forget everything as long as I do not forget just one." (i.e. as long as I do not forget Allāh *taʿālā* – compiler)

He said on one occasion: "Sometimes I feel so withdrawn from relations that I feel that these two wives which I have is a severe battle which must come to an end. At such a time I impose on myself to make duʿā' for long life for them so that – Allāh forbid – my thoughts do not affect these poor women." When the crowds of seekers used to depart after Ramadān, Hadrat Wālā would feel a lot of peace and tranquillity and say:

"Crowds are very weighty on my disposition. Yes I do have the sickness of wanting a few close friends nearby; I do not like total solitude." He used to say very often: "The moment a task comes before me, I am overcome with a concern to finish it off as quickly as possible because I want to keep my heart empty so that whenever I get the inspiration, the heart is ready to engage in Allāh's remembrance and is able to focus on it easily. This is why I am severely disturbed and agitated when someone is engaged in futile conversations." The moment H̲ad̲rat Wālā completed a task, he would take a tasbīh̲ in his hand. Sometimes he would say jokingly: "I have named it a trap because people are trapped by it."

In short, H̲ad̲rat Wālā could not tolerate sitting idly at any time. In fact, he did not approve of it for others as well. He wanted people to remain occupied in their tasks even if they were worldly tasks. He did not want them to waste their time. A scholar is of the opinion that because H̲ad̲rat Wālā was very much overcome by fear [of Allāh *taʿālā*] and had an extremely delicate disposition, he used to keep himself occupied in some task or the other and create a balance in this quality of fear in this way. This is not far fetched for H̲ad̲rat Wālā because in his young days he had gone through a period of fear which created thoughts of suicide in him. Based on the experience which he got from this period of fear and from other situations, he used to say: "A seeker must never detach himself completely. He must engage in certain permissible practices. If his heart is left completely empty, Shayt̲ān gets an opportunity to meddle with him. This could result in a very terrifying condition.

I heard the same scholar quoting a statement of H̲ad̲rat Wālā on the subject of the above-mentioned fear: "I neither think that Allāh *taʿālā* will punish me nor do I think I will gain salvation. It is a strangely confusing feeling which cannot be explained."

I recall another statement: "Notwithstanding Allāh's quality of subjugation, you get the fear of the greatness of the Being of Allāh. For example – without intending a similarity – a lion is in a cage. The awe which is in its essence creates a fear in you, although you are fully convinced that in its present condition it can neither attack you nor cause you any harm. This is the type of fear which the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* have because they are completely safe from punishment."

I recall another statement: “When a pious person passes away, I think to myself I do not know for what action he will be taken to task. When an impious person passes away, I think to myself I do not know for what action he will be forgiven.”

A person wrote and complained about loneliness. Hadrat Wālā replied: “How can one complain about loneliness in the presence of [this Hadīth Qudsī]: ‘I [Allāh] am the companion of the one who remembers Me’?”

Once when I was departing, I expressed my sorrow. Hadrat Wālā said: “There is no need to be distressed. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the treasure of consolation is present all the time.”

He said on one occasion: “A novice concentrates on the words when he is performing salāh and he ought to concentrate on them. The intermediate person concentrates on the meanings. However, the master neither concentrates on the words nor on the meanings, his focus is solely on Allāh *taʿālā*.” I said: “It seems to me that concentrating on the meanings is the objective in every condition.” He said: “Not when compared to focusing on Allāh *taʿālā*. For example, when a person presents himself in a royal court, certain special titles and etiquette are laid down. However, when he is directly in front of the king, he is totally focussed on the king’s grand position, not on the words and meanings. He does not even think of what he is saying. If the master starts to focus on the words and meanings, it will cause him serious confusion.”

Hadrat Wālā said on many occasions: “Allāh’s relationship with me is as though He is continually saying to me: ‘Look! I did this favour to you. Look! This is the mercy I showered on you. Look! I gave you this bounty.’ I do not hear any voice, but all my affairs continue in this manner as though He is continually reminding me.” Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of his affiliation.

From these unique incidents and lofty conditions we also learn how much Hadrat Wālā used to constantly supervise his heart and emotions, and how particular he was in keeping them on the path of balance and moderation. We had quoted this statement of his previously: “All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I do not permit my temperament to have the better of my intellect and for my intellect to have the better of the Sharīʿah.”

At the very end when he could not even raise his head, he used to perform salāh with gestures while lying down after having performed tayammum. No matter what excusable condition, how much of hardship, and the extent of inconvenience he suffered because of the bouts of diarrhoea and removal of impurities; by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* he never allowed himself to miss a single salāh until the very end. Hadrat Wālā was so particular about cleanliness that if the slightest impurity, ink, medicine, tea and other drinks or food items fell on his clothes, his hands or beard, he would ask for water immediately, leave aside all other tasks, and personally wash them off. This was always his practice and continued until the last day. Because he was suffering from continuous diarrhoea, some material was folded and laid beneath him. He used to relieve himself while lying down, and the material would be replaced each time. Both his wives used to see to his purification needs at the time of salāh.

When he was being cleaned at zuhr time, I went and sat outside due to purdah restrictions. I overheard Hadrat Wālā saying to his senior wife who was cleaning him at the time: "I can feel some impurity on my back." She probably said to him that there was no impurity there, so he said to her: "Dip a cloth in water and give it to me, I will clean it myself." Hadrat Wālā most probably felt that there was impurity there while there was nothing.

The Maulānā who assisted in bathing the deceased [Hadrat Wālā] used to relate: "He [Hadrat Wālā] had been having bouts of diarrhoea the entire day. So when I was bathing him, I took particular care in ensuring absolute purification. I was astonished to see not even a sign of impurity on any part of his body." In fact, he paid additional attention to massaging Hadrat Wālā's stomach [to remove impurities] because of his case of diarrhoea. He used to say: "Not even any moistness appeared. There was absolutely nothing in his stomach."

Hadrat Wālā was most fastidious about salāh until the very end. He addressed me specifically a few days before his demise and said: "There are two things which I am extremely concerned about, salāh and fulfilment of rights." In order to pacify him, I said: "Hadrat, despite your weakness and fatigue, you are performing your salāhs. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, you have not allowed yourself to miss any salāh. As for the

fulfilment of rights, Hadrat, you did not leave anything outstanding. You placed the amounts together with a note in the appropriate packets when the time was up. When you received any amount which was for someone else, you conveyed it to the person the moment you received it. In short, all the amounts are clearly marked."

After hearing my speech, Hadrat Wālā said in a strange helpless tone: "How can I make you understand? I do not know at what level these two things [salāh and rights] will be viewed."

When I related this statement of Hadrat Wālā: "There are two things which I am extremely concerned about, salāh and fulfilment of rights" to some 'ulamā', they said that according to some narrations these were also the last words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

الصلوة وما ملكت أيمانكم

Be mindful of salāh and whatever your right hands possess.

Hadrat Wālā was certainly very concerned about salāh and the fulfilment of rights until the very end. He performed his salāhs to the very end without missing a single one. As for the fulfilment of rights, it was his last act as will be explained further on. He was also extremely mindful of fasting. Despite being considerably weak and ill, he kept all the fasts of the last Ramadān. As for the Ramadān before that, he was in Lucknow for medical treatment. He had missed all except for one. He made up for all of them but did not keep them continuously. He was very mindful of making up for them and repeatedly said to us – the attendants – in a very hopeful tone: "Pray that I get so much of strength that I can keep the fasts of two months continuously."

Subsequently, by the help of Allāh *taʿālā*, he was successful in this regard. The wisdom in completing them before hand came to the fore that had he not completed them at that time, he would never had had the ability to complete them and he would have been accountable for all those fasts. In short, by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* he did not leave a single salāh nor a single fast in his account despite his physical debility and ill-health. This is the favour of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all to do the same through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

As for the fasts which he missed during his treatment in Lucknow, they were missed out of necessity. Despite his acute weakness and illness, he kept one fast as a trial. He said: "I am terrified at the thought that everyone will be fasting while I will not. I will be like a tanner among noblemen." After keeping the one fast, his severe physical debility did not give him the courage to keep more fasts nor did the doctors permit him. Anyway, the doctors had prohibited him from before but Hadrat Wālā decided to keep one fast as a trial and out of enthusiasm to gauge his health.

Before Hadrat Wālā's illness, whenever he had to get up or sit up, he used to say in a very humble and emotional tone: "O Master." After he fell ill and it became very difficult for him to get up, he would make an intention [to get up] for a long time, say *Bismillāh* with full force and sit up. At night he would ask the attendant who was in charge of locking the doors: "Did you say *Bismillāh*?" He prohibited leaving any water uncovered. These are a few incidents related to his specific forms of worship. As for the acts of worship which took on the form of serving Allāh's creation, there is no exact number for them. When it came to his monetary services, it was his practice from the very beginning to set aside one quarter of his income for optional charities. This is apart from the zakāh which he used to give. In fact, he used to give more than that one quarter. He had a separate notebook for this purpose. There were times when he gave very large amounts, depending on the need. In this way, he spent hundreds and thousands of rupees in charity during his life. He even made a bequest for one quarter of his estate to be spent in charity. Details in this regard are to be found in the forthcoming bequest. Arrangements to spend from it are presently under way.

In addition to the above, people used to send hundreds of thousands of rupees to Hadrat Wālā after believing him to be a most trustworthy person who knows best who is most deserving, and on which occasions the monies must be spent. No beggar left empty-handed. Hadrat Wālā would certainly give something depending on what he had and what the need was, provided the person practised on the principles which he laid down and did not do anything improper. Hadrat Wālā kept a watchful eye on the residents of the Khānqāh, his associates, the needs of local and outside needy people, and would help them when the situation demanded.

There were certain special occasions – especially when it came to the needy associates of 'ulamā' and noble people – when he gave large amounts of money. There were several needy people who used to receive a monthly amount. However, based on several underlying reasons, he made a condition with them that they must remind him monthly via a postcard. If – in the process of rectification - a person was given advice with regard to a matter which needed him to spend money, Hadrat Wālā would be the first to offer his help. He was always in search for occasions when he could be of help.

We quoted a letter in this regard previously wherein Hadrat Wālā had also said to the person: "You must first make sufficient arrangements for your expenses. If your salary is not enough, you must make a collection from your well-wishers. Allāh willing, I too will join in." Hadrat Wālā used to give large amounts for good works. We would very often see him distributing clothes among the poor, sometimes cash and sometimes food. All these charities were well organized and under strict principles, as was his norm with all other minor and major tasks.

Hadrat Wālā was an embodiment of generosity and munificence. After his demise, I personally saw some poor people crying out before me and saying: "When Hadrat was around, we received a lot of strength, we did not have any worries, he was a great support, and we were at ease. Now we are in extreme difficulty. We do not know what to do and where to go." There is one particular poor person who, whenever I meet him, says: "O, Hadrat has not died, it is we who have died."

Hadrat Wālā had a separate account for giving loans. Based merely on occasions of trust, he would unhesitatingly give large sums of money – in the thousands – as a loan without a piece of note. When his surgeon asked him for a loan, he immediately gave him 200 rupees and said: "You must pay back when you can. If you cannot, there is no need to pay back." But he paid it back very quickly. Some people really delayed in their payments and caused him much agitation. In order to save himself from further agitation, he said to them: "Tell me frankly if you can pay it back or not." When some of them apologized and said that they cannot pay back, he cancelled off considerable amounts of money.

Hadrat Wālā used to say: “Despite so many conditions and restrictions for the acceptance of gifts, Allāh *taʿālā* gave me plenty. There were months when I received 1 000 rupees.” His income was divided into three parts. Two parts were given to his two wives while one part was for himself. However, he used to say: “I become terrified when too much of money gets accumulated by me. This is why when a considerable amount gets accumulated, I divide it between my two wives. Towards the end, he abstained from keeping his part. Instead, the monies which he received would be kept aside and he would spend from there if he had any personal need. At the end of the month he would distribute the remaining amount between his two wives. Although Hadrat Wālā’s independence was well known and observed by people, when he still received gifts which did not fulfil his conditions, he would return them to the giver. This happened every other day. In most instances of this nature he used to say: “I become afraid when I return gifts lest Allāh *taʿālā* says to me: ‘You unworthy fellow! I send gifts to you and you put on lofty airs,’ and stops sending to me completely. In this way all my independence will be scattered. Another reason for my independence is that Allāh *taʿālā* has given me plenty and constantly gives me. In fact, I very often notice that when I return a certain amount, Allāh *taʿālā* sends me an excellent exchange via someone else. But what can I do, my self-respect prevents me from accepting when my conditions are not met. I am neither greedy nor very pious, but I certainly have a lot of self-respect.” He said to us jokingly on one occasion: “I am engaged in this occupation for so long but I still feel ashamed to accept.” In short, Hadrat Wālā always maintained his fervour of independence within the limits on possibilities and thoughts of this nature.”

On one occasion during his illness I said to him: “If we were to act as independent as Hadrat, we will develop pride in ourselves.” Hadrat Wālā replied: “The one who fears pride must not choose to be independent. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I am convinced that my independence does not stem from pride. Previously I had many pre-conditions but eventually the essence of all pre-conditions is limited to just two matters. One is that they must not expect me to remember the gift which was given to me, and the other is that they must not expect me to give them any concessions in their interaction with me.” Once Hadrat Wālā is convinced of these two, he permits them

to give him a gift. In order for him to be sure that it is the same person who was given permission to send a gift, Hadrat Wālā writes the date and time and instructs the person to include the following in the money order coupon: "As per the permission obtained on such and such date, such and such day, at such and such time." If this is not noted the money order will be returned.

I asked Hadrat Wālā on one occasion: "What if a person fabricates the above and writes it from his side?" He replied: "Then there will be no doubt whatsoever about his sincerity because I would have now learnt that he is extremely sincere to the extent that he is fabricating a permission from his side and sending a gift to me." As for the one with whom Hadrat Wālā has had an old bond and is satisfied with the person, he accepts a gift from him without any pre-condition. However, there are some occasions of this nature when he says to the person: "The amount you want to give me is far beyond my status. Just one or two rupees are in line with my status. The amount which you want to give me is too much." In most cases, he used to say to the giver: "This is too much." But he would accept it if the person insisted. As for those who were young – especially those whom Hadrat Wālā knew since childhood – he would say to them: "You are too young. I ought to be giving you and not the other way around." If the youngster insisted, Hadrat Wālā would accept so as not to offend him. However, if any person's gift did not fulfil his pre-conditions, he would refuse it without hesitation no matter how big the gift. For example, we related the incident of a money order of 300 rupees coming to him for his personal use and which he sent back without hesitation.

Most incidents concerning monetary charities have been related. In addition to these, Hadrat Wālā gave a lot as continuous charities. He purchased shares in certain companies and made them waqf. He bought a piece of land which he made waqf. He also bought certain orchards and made them waqf. Similar was the case with a building. He wrote detailed and clear information about all these and had them published in his *Sharā'it Wasāyā* (preconditions for bequests). He was so enthusiastic about waqf that the thought crossed his mind on one occasion that if he were to receive 100 000 rupees, what would he do? Bearing in mind that his blessed disposition was extremely perceptive and delicate, the

coming of this thought caused him agitation and he only regained his composure when his mind decided on where he would spend it. The thought came to him that he will purchase all the lands of Thānah Bhawan and make them waqf so that at least one place will become a pure Dār al-Islam. Glory to Allāh! What aspirations! What noble thoughts!

In addition to the above-mentioned bequests, he took his massive library – which by and large consisted of his own writings – sent it to the Madrasah in Sahāranpūr and made it waqf there. He also sent sizeable quantities of books periodically to the Madrasah in Deoband, Sahāranpūr and other madāris. He spent large amounts of money to have major works written and published, e.g. *I'lā' as-Sunan, Bawādir an-Nawādir, Hīlah Nājizah.* Although most of them were published with monies which were sent to him by others, he used his own money whenever there was a need, purchase them and distribute them.

He took a walk through the entire Madrasah for the sake of distributing copies of *I'lā' as-Sunan.* He was not bed-ridden as yet but was quite weak. On that day, he conducted the after-zuhr assembly in the assembly room of the Khānqāh from where he had been causing oceans of knowledge to flow for almost half a century. It was after quite some time that he conducted an assembly here because he was now conducting his assemblies in the male-section which was next to the female-section of his house. He was doing this because of his illness. All the attendants and Hadrat Wālā himself experienced a lot of satisfaction at being able to conduct his assembly in his original place once again. In fact, he said to all who were present: "It seems as though I have returned to my origins. However, because the toilet is far and I have a need to go repeatedly, I cannot do so because of my weakness. I am compelled not to sit here. My heart does not feel attached to any other place and I feel the blessings here because it is the place of our pious elders."

It was then decided to place a bench in one of the bathrooms and Hadrat Wālā would pay a rent for it. He asked whether it was permissible for a trustee to do that. Although the 'ulamā' from among his special servants said that there seems to be permissibility for it, Hadrat Wālā said: "Since it concerns me, my opinion or the opinion of my close associates should not

considered to be reliable. The question should be posed to Sahāranpūr and Deoband.” This was done, but because one scenario which was in the form of a way-out was presented to one Dār al-ʿUlūm and the other Dār al-ʿUlūm said that it was not permissible for a trustee to take it on rent, Hadrat Wālā did not act on this proposal.

That was Hadrat Wālā’s last assembly which was conducted in the Khānqāh and the last time that he came there. He could not come again. In fact, after some time he had to suspend the assemblies which he had been conducting in the male-section of his house because his bouts of diarrhoea had started by then.

A special sign of an ʿālim-e-rabbānī is that he is intensely desirous of acquiring knowledge and imparting and propagating it. I think it is most probably a statement of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* that a person cannot be an ʿālim if he does not acquire knowledge from his seniors, peers and juniors. Hadrat Amīr Shāh Khān Sāhib Marhūm used to constantly quote a statement of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *rahimahullāh*: “If a person does not have that amount of enthusiasm for propagating Dīn as much as he has for the fulfilment of human needs such as eating and drinking, he cannot render true and complete services to Dīn.” The one who observed Hadrat Wālā knows that – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – this was always his condition. Even if he were to hear something of wisdom from a child or an illiterate ignorant person, he would preserve it with immense value and quote it in his assemblies while attributing it to the person from whom he heard it.

Similarly, Allāh *taʿālā* placed in his blessed heart that strong and powerful zeal for the propagation of Dīn to the extent that he was always restless in this regard. He felt fatigued from doing other works but not from rendering academic services notwithstanding his physical debility.

On one occasion one of Hadrat Wālā’s khulafā’ who was an ʿālim sent his recently written book to Hadrat Wālā. He added a note to Hadrat Wālā in which he said: “I do not have the courage to present it to Hadrat due to his weakness, at the same time I do not have the courage for any of my written works to be published without Hadrat having seen it. My only request to Hadrat is to check just a few lines and to see the

subject matter of the book at the beginning.” Hadrat Wālā wrote back: “I went through the entire book because reading it increased my energy and I did not feel any tiredness.” It is as a result of Hadrat Wālā’s ardent enthusiasm for the proliferation of Dīnī knowledge that we see about 1 000 of his written works in the form of books, lectures and statements still guiding thousands of Muslims to this day – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

Despite writing so many books, Hadrat Wālā was particularly concerned about being able to write a book on every issue which face the Muslims. Furthermore, Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him with a sizeable number of distinguished ‘ulamā’ who were among his attendants. He would most often advise these ‘ulamā’ to write on various subjects and would take a personal part in helping them in their writing. Consequently, other ‘ulamā’ initiated a significant series of written works as per the counsel and instruction of Hadrat Wālā. This includes a few books to which Hadrat Wālā paid particular attention and spent large amounts of money. The most voluminous of these is *Iʿlā’ as-Sunan* which contains proofs and substantiations from Ahādīth for the jurisprudence of Imām A‘zam Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. These are presented in a very decisive, investigative, balanced and just manner.

This is a unique book which – although several ‘ulamā’ have written on this subject – has no equal as regards its completeness and details. A major portion of this book is written by Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib. Hadrat Wālā’s observations and counsels cover a large portion of this book. This work continued for about 25-30 years and about 40 000 rupees were spent in compiling and publishing it. Eventually, it was completed while Hadrat Wālā was alive and enjoying good health. Eleven volumes have already been printed, and about four or five volumes remain. Their printing has been deferred for the time being because of the current high price of paper. Allāh willing, once paper becomes available, the remaining volumes will be printed quickly.

Another work in this regard is *al-Hīlah an-Nājizah li al-Halīlah al-ʿĀjizah* in which Shar‘ī concessions are provided for those poor women whose husbands are gone missing, disappeared, are impotent, or are present but are not fulfilling their duties of maintenance. In the absence of a Shar‘ī judge in India, these

women were getting fed up and becoming apostates. Others were getting caught up in immoral and shameless acts. On seeing this serious tragedy, Hadrat Wālā focussed on looking for Sharʿī concessions to free women from these difficulties.

Consequently, he referred to the books of the four schools of jurisprudence and consulted with the eminent ʿulamā' of India. He then prepared a manuscript with the help of Maulānā ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Gumthalwī and Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī. Once it was ready, Hadrat Wālā had it printed at his cost and distributed it for free.

The third important work is *Ahkām al-Qur'ān*. Around the year 1350 A.H. it was decided in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband that just as the important Hadīth collections are taught in one year [known as Daurah Hadīth], the major tafsīr works also be taught in one year. It was also decided that the opening lesson of this Daurah Tafsīr be conducted by Hadrat Wālā. A delegation of senior ʿulamā' which was headed by Hadrat Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Sāhib Madanī came to Thānah Bhawan to present this request to Hadrat Wālā. It was felt that the entire tafsīr of Baydāwī and Ibn Kathīr be taught. And for the clarification of the Hanafī school, *Tafsīr Madārik* be prescribed. However, Hadrat Wālā said that there are very few verses in which there are differences among the Imāms. Therefore, instead of teaching the whole of *Tafsīr Madārik*, it would be better if selected verses be taught. All the elders approved of this suggestion and Hadrat Wālā also suggested a name for that imaginary work there and then. He suggested the name *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān ʿalā Masā'il an-Nuʿmān*.

Subsequently, various coincidences prevented the task of selection and compilation to be initiated in Deoband. After waiting for two to three years, Hadrat Wālā felt that this is a very important task. He felt that just as the proofs of the Hanafīs from Ahādīth have been collated in *Iʿlā' as-Sunan*, proofs of the Hanafīs from the Qur'ān must be collated in *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān ʿalā Masā'il an-Nuʿmān*. Hadrat Wālā decided to personally initiate this task and handed it over to Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī in 1354 A.H. Hadrat Wālā laid down and identified the principles and methodology to be adopted for this work. He made a list of all the verses in Sūrah al-Baqarah which are related to this work and gave it to him. Maulānā Shafīʿ Sāhib started the work but he was too

occupied with his responsibilities in the iftā department at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. He had very little time for this task and so progress was very slow. In the meantime, Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib had just completed *Iʿlā' as-Sunan*. Hadrat Wālā felt that if he took up the task of *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān*, the work will be completed quickly. It was therefore given to him.

It so happened that after some time, Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib went to Dhaka University as a Professor, and could not continue with this work in a manner as it ought to be done. Those who knew Hadrat Wālā knew very well that once a work is initiated, he cannot rest until it is completed. This is why he began thinking of ways to divert the work in some other direction.

Hadrat Wālā first asked Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī if he could take an extended leave from Dār al-ʿUlūm and stay in Thānah Bhawan in order to continue with this work. However, because he was in the high position of the iftā department, there was no way he could take an extended leave. It was then decided to divide the work into parts and give it to a few ʿulamā' so that the work can be completed in this way.

The work was divided among four people. The first two manzils[1] were given to Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib, the third and fourth to Maulānā Jamīl Ahmad Sāhib Thānwī, the fifth and sixth to Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī, and the last manzil to Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī, a lecturer at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

This work did not commence completely as yet when Hadrat Wālā fell ill which eventually proved to be his final illness before death. He became weaker by the day. However, just as he continued his other works despite his illness and weakness, his concern for the writing of this book continued. Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī tended his resignation [at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband] and came to live in Thānah Bhawan. This was in 1362 A.H. which also happens to be the year of Hadrat Wālā's demise. Hadrat Wālā then decided that Maulānā Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib will devote himself to this work and Hadrat Wālā also expressed his happiness at this in several of

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[1] The Qur'ān is divided into seven manzils or stations to facilitate a weekly completion of the Qur'ān. (translator)

his assemblies. The work then commenced as decided by Hadrat Wālā.

This was the time when Hadrat Wālā had stopped going to the Khānqāh because of his severe physical debility. His illness was worsening by the day and so was his weakness. However, his enthusiasm to serve Dīn and knowledge of Dīn overpowered these impediments. When the work on *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān* commenced, Hadrat Wālā delivered a lengthy talk to the Maulānā [Muftī Shafī' Sāhib] on several verses, by telling him that such and such injunctions are derived from such and such verses. The Maulānā must search for them in the tafsīr books and if they are mentioned therein, he must note them. Hadrat Wālā also went into detail in explaining the manner in which the book must be written, what must be done and what must be left out. Hadrat Wālā would then ask the Maulānā daily about which verse he wrote on that day and what he wrote. He would then provide him with in-depth points that were appropriate to each verse.

When the work started, many injunctions came to the fore which were undoubtedly referred to by verses. However, the scholars who had written books on the subject of juridical verses did not note them for some reason or the other. Hadrat Wālā therefore felt that the theme of this book should now be elevated and made more general. In other words, it should not be confined to proofs of the Hanafīs but to all injunctions irrespective of whether they are related to juridical injunctions, beliefs, Sufism, morals or society. Special focus should be placed on injunctions which have become targets of doubt and misgiving through the effects of Western education and modern sciences. Hadrat Wālā added that this does not mean that *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān 'alā Masā'il an-Nu'mān* should be abandoned. Rather, it will also be a part of *Ahkām al-Qur'ān*. When the book is completed, verses related to this subject [proofs of Hanafīs] will be selected and a separate book titled *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān* will be prepared.

Although Hadrat Wālā's illness and weakness were worsening and it was becoming difficult for him to talk, together with suffering from bouts of drowsiness, he continued inquiring about *Ahkām al-Qur'ān* and providing his input. The Maulānā commenced with Sūrah al-Qasas on the 3rd of Rajab and Hadrat Wālā passed away on the 16th of that month. When the

Maulānā informed Hadrat Wālā that he is commencing with this sūrah, Hadrat Wālā delivered a very unique explanation on one of its verses. The Maulānā did note it but unfortunately it was not decreed for Hadrat Wālā to complete his explanation. After Hadrat Wālā's tragic and sorrowful demise, the hearts and minds of his attendants did not have the capability of thinking and pondering over any specific task. When they regained their composure after some time and the need to continue with their tasks came to their minds, an astounding world was presented before them. The importance of the task and Hadrat Wālā's engrossment in it demanded that it be completed in the best and quickest way possible. Although Hadrat Wālā's explanations which were the soul of this book had now been cut off and broke the courage of those who were working on it, it was overwhelmingly decided that the book must be completed in line with the principles which had been laid down by Hadrat Wālā.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Maulānā [Muftī Shafīʿ Sāhib] is presently working on this project. Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib, Maulānā Jamīl Sāhib and Maulānā Idrīs Sāhib are also occupied with their respective sections and doing it according to the time that is available to them. May Allāh *taʿālā* help them and enable them to complete it.

There are two other books which are worthy of mention under this discussion. The material for these books had been noted by Hadrat Wālā's blessed pen, he had even given titles to them, but the written book form could not be realized.

One is titled *al-Qaul al-Mansūr fī Ibn al-Mansūr*. This book contains an account of the life of Mansūr Hallāj and a balanced and equitable appraisal of him. The other is titled *Aydī al-Hādī ʿan Hayd al-Hādī*. This book establishes the belief in the eternal stay in the Hell-fire and a reply to a book of Ibn Qayyim. Hadrat Wālā made reference to these two books in his bequest as follows: "I advise my ʿulamā' associates in general, and Maulwī Zafar Ahmad Sāhib and Maulwī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī in particular, to complete these two books." Allāh *taʿālā* enabled both these books to be completed while Hadrat Wālā was still living. This brought immense joy to him. The first book was completed by Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib. As regards the second book, Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī wrote a detailed book titled *ad-Dīn al-Qayyim* and

showed it to Hadrat Wālā who then stated that it suffices in place of the second book.

Imām Muhammad *rahimahullāh* said with reference to knowledge of Dīn:

إن صناعتنا هذه من المهد إلى اللحد

This craft of ours commences from the cradle and continues until we reach our grave.

Hadrat Wālā demonstrated this practically. He had lost all his physical strength yet his enthusiasm to continue benefiting Dīn was as described by a person on his love for wine and a goblet:

> Although there is no movement in my hand, there is some life in my eyes. Just leave the wine-cup and goblet by me, we will see when death comes.

In short, Hadrat Wālā devoted his entire life – and that too, a long life by Allāh's will – to just one objective, viz. service to Dīn.

فجزاه الله في الآخرة أحسن الجزاء، وأعطاه الله الدرجات العلى، ورزقه مرافقة الأنبياء

May Allāh reward him with the best of rewards in the Hereafter, confer him with the highest stages, and bless him with the companionship of the Prophets.

The essence of all the details as regards Hadrat Wālā's internal and external actions is that – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – his condition was as sought for in the following established supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سَرِيْرَتِيْ خَيْرًا مِّنْ عَلَانِيَتِيْ، وَاجْعَلْ عَلَانِيَتِيْ صَالِحَةً

O Allāh! Make my inner self better than my outer self, and make my outer self good as well.

And in the following supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ وَسَاوِسَ قَلْبِيْ خَشْيَتَكَ وَذِكْرَكَ، وَاجْعَلْ هِمَّتِيْ وَهَوَايَ فِيْمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضٰى، اَللّٰهُمَّ وَمَا ابْتَلَيْتَنِيْ بِهِ مِنْ رَّخَآءٍ وَّشِدَّةٍ فَمَسِّكْنِيْ بِسُنَّةِ الْحَقِّ وَشَرِيْعَةِ الْإِسْلَامِ.

O Allāh! Turn the whisperings of my heart into Your fear and Your remembrance. Utilize my courage and desire for what You love and are pleased with. O Allāh! Whenever You test me with

regard to anything, be it easy or difficult, keep me steadfast on the true path and the Sharīʿah of Islam.

If the reader considers all these details collectively and ponders over them, he will affirm my opinion word for word, and will find an affirmation of these two supplications in every minute aspect of Hadrat Wālā's life. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with these bounties as well. Āmīn.

From the above details we learn only the effects of those external and internal situations which were observed. As for the blessings and effulgence which the masters of the internal self fathomed, those are known to them alone.

If it were possible for us to gauge any of these to a certain extent, they can be gauged from *Tarbīyyatus Sālik*. Just a few days before his demise, a scholar said to Hadrat Wālā: "A person will be able to learn the path from *Bawādir*." Hadrat Wālā replied: "If a person wants to learn the path, *Tarbīyyatus Sālik* is there. *Bawādir an-Nawādir* by and large consists of rare points and sciences."

I recall an old statement with reference to special internal sciences. Hadrat Wālā said: "A genuine seeker never searches for the supernatural feats of his shaykh nor does he perceive a need for them because he observes the blessings of his shaykh – which are the fundamental supernatural feats – all the time." Consequently, most of Hadrat Wālā's attendants used to feel the effects of his focus and attention not only when they were present before him but also when they were away. This was especially so with those who used to continue corresponding with him. This is how they progressed by the day and their lives changed for the better even though there was no apparent focus and most of them were not addressed.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that through Allāh's help and Hadrat Wālā's blessings, I have completed my description of matters related to Hadrat Wālā's demise. In the course of this description, I presented aspects from his life irrespective of whether they were connected to the discussion or not. They are, nevertheless, not devoid of any blessings and effects.

I now describe the exact event of Hadrat Wālā's demise.

H̲ad̲rat Wālā's Demise

Look at this coincidence! I am writing on this terrifying and sorrowful incident on a Tuesday night after the ʿishā and tarāwīh̲ s̲alāh. It is the same day and time when the incident took place. I mentioned previously that H̲ad̲rat Wālā was suffering from continuous diarrhoea from Monday morning. Several layers of cloth were laid beneath him, he used to relieve himself while lying down, and the cloth would be replaced each time. At the time of s̲alāh, both his wives would take particular care in seeing to his purification needs. The bouts of diarrhoea made him extremely weak. He no longer experienced any drowsiness and he was able to explain everything as it was happening. This satisfied the doctors because his mind had opened up and he was speaking uninterruptedly. He complained about perceiving some darkness before his eyes, and it seemed that H̲ad̲rat Wālā knew that this is his last day. Consequently, when it was mentioned before him that the doctors have allowed the cook to add rice to the chicken curry for the evening, he said: "I do not even want to be present until that time."

Similarly, he said to his junior wife: "I am going today." She asked: "Where to?" He replied: "Don't you know?" Furthermore, close to three o' clock in the afternoon, H̲ad̲rat Wālā's brother-in-law [wife's sister's husband], Janāb Deputy ʿAlī Sajjād S̲āh̲ib came to inquire about his well-being. H̲ad̲rat Wālā said to him: "Go and tell H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib that my hands and legs have become lifeless, my breathing is half and inflated." When Deputy S̲āh̲ib proceeded to relate this to the H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib, H̲ad̲rat Wālā's junior wife came near the window and said in a low tone: "He [H̲ad̲rat Wālā] said that he is going to be here until maghrib."

When I entered after Deputy S̲āh̲ib's departure, H̲ad̲rat Wālā said the same thing to me: "I am having difficulty in breathing." I said: "H̲ad̲rat has always been complaining about shortness of breath. It settles down after a massage." He said: "I never experienced so much of discomfort in my life." I also decided to go to the H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib and inform him. When I returned, H̲ad̲rat Wālā was cleansing himself, so I waited outside. Since quite some time had passed I forgot about it, but H̲ad̲rat Wālā himself asked me on my return: "What reply did the H̲akīm S̲āh̲ib give?" I reprimanded myself over my memory and thanked Allāh *taʿālā* over the fact that despite his critical

condition, Hadrat Wālā remembered himself and asked the question [about Hakīm Sāhib's reply].

Maulānā Jamīl Ahmad Sāhib came in after that. Hadrat Wālā said: "I am finding it very difficult to breathe, massage my chest a bit." The Maulānā asked: "Should I apply some oil?" He replied: "No, massage it just like that." Just then Hakīm Muhammad Sa'īd Sāhib Gangohī came in to inquire about Hadrat Wālā's health. He had been treating Hadrat Wālā before Hakīm Sāhib Lucknowī. Despite this, he remained on account of his deep bond with Hadrat Wālā. Someone asked him whether it will be better to massage him with almond oil or red oil, because previously he had been experiencing relief with almond oil. The Hakīm Sāhib said that the red oil will be more beneficial. So they began massaging Hadrat Wālā with it and the Hakīm Sāhib, contrary to his practice, remained there for quite some time. When he left, Hadrat Wālā said: "I did not find any benefit at all from this oil. I have been benefiting from almond oil, I ought to be massaged with it."

Look at Hadrat Wālā's consideration of the Hakīm Sāhib despite his critical condition and the discomfort which he was experiencing. As long as he was seated there, he did not act against the Hakīm Sāhib's recommendation and did not ask to be massaged with almond oil. Before the 'asr salāh he said to all those who are present: "I am lying down here unable to do anything at all. What kind of life is this? Now the time must arrive." Even at this time, he was fretting over his inability to do any work. His biggest grief was that he had become powerless to do any work. And what was his work? Serving the seekers – those who were with him and those who were away. Even on that day he inspected all the post which came and checked the addresses to see if any of his attendant's letter was there. Hadrat Wālā took support from two people and sat up. Maulānā Jamīl Ahmad Sāhib who was one of the two said: "It is the time for 'asr salāh, why don't you perform your salāh now so that you do not have to get up again?" Hadrat Wālā responded in the affirmative and performed his salāh while sitting although he had been performing his salāh while lying down. He did not have the strength in his hands to place them on his knees. He rested on his forearms, only then could his hands remain on his knees. After the 'asr salāh, Hadrat Wālā asked for Janāb Maulānā Shabbīr 'Alī Sāhib, the principal of

the Madrasah and Khānqāh. Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib was gone to Sahāranpūr to bring medicines for Hadrat Wālā.

Hadrat Wālā's wife felt that if he was told that Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī is gone to Sahāranpūr, it will cause discomfort to Hadrat Wālā, so she said: "Very well, I will call him." Hadrat Wālā asked for him again after a short while, and she gave him the same reply to save him from restlessness. When he asked for him several more times, Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī's wife said to Hadrat Wālā's wife: "He is already feeling restless from asking so many times. He must be thinking: I am calling for him, why is he not coming? He should therefore be informed that he is gone to Sahāranpūr to bring medicines for you." Hadrat Wālā's wife eventually said: "He is gone to Sahāranpūr to bring medicines for you. Allāh willing, he will return by the evening."

Hadrat Wālā became very perturbed when he heard this and said: "I had some work with him with regard to the Khānqāh." Hadrat Wālā's wife said: "You can tell it to me." He said: "You will not be able to understand it." He then expressed his sorrow over Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī's absence. She said: "You can explain the matter to someone who is present here." Hadrat Wālā kept silent. In order to put an end to his restlessness, Hadrat Wālā's wife called for Maulānā Jamīl Ahmad immediately after the maghrib salāh and said: "Maulwī Jamīl is present, you can explain the matter to him." It was most likely that in order to put the matter at rest, Hadrat Wālā asked for the small box in which all trusts were kept. This box did not contain any trusts belonging to the Madrasah. At the same time, Hadrat Wālā's senses were still so sharp that it could never have been deduced that he asked for the box for no reason, knowing that no Madrasah trusts were in it. Rather, it was his intention to put the matter to rest. It was therefore said to him: "Explain the matter to Maulwī Jamīl and Maulwī Zafar." But he chose to remain silent. On hearing all these conversations, the girls in the house began crying.

Hadrat Wālā's junior wife said: "Look, the girls are crying. Why are you saying such depressing things? What is the hurry? When your breathing improves in the morning, you can explain everything." Hadrat Wālā said: "These girls who are crying are mad. Do you think I am saying these things out of despair? This is a matter of rights of fellow humans and an order from Allāh *taʿālā*. It is therefore necessary to explain everything

about all trusts." After performing the maghrib salāh while lying down, he asked his junior wife: "Have I given you two your monthly allowance?" She convinced him by saying: "We have received a lot. We have more than enough for our expenses. You already gave us, there is no need for you to worry."

He then asked for the monies to be taken out from the envelopes which were entrusted to him. Fourteen annas came out from one. He said: "There ought to be fifteen." When they checked properly, one more came out. He then asked for a second envelope to be emptied. It contained six five rupee notes and a few coins. He tried to count the notes himself and said something but they could not understand what he was saying. Just then, he fell unconscious and the notes fell on his chest. Both his hands remained on his chest.

Handing over these trusts and explaining them were his last actions. There was nothing which needed explanation because, as per his norm, the amount which the envelope contained was written on the envelope and another note was placed inside. It contained all necessary details about the amount. However, because he was so particular about the rights of fellow humans, this thought overwhelmed him until the very end. We had related this in detail previously. Two or three days before his demise he had told me: "I am very concerned about two things, salāh and rights." Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib used to say that he had explained everything about the trust several times before, and he intended explaining something else to us but we could not learn it.

Hadrat Wālā did not come to his senses after the above episode of falling unconscious. He remained unconscious for about one and quarter hour. He was breathing rapidly and with a sound. Janāb Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib – Hadrat Wālā's sister's son – continued reading Yā Sīn and other sūrahs, and was giving him drops of zam zam water with a spoon. I, together with a few others, were standing helplessly and observing everything sorrowfully. We also continued reading Yā Sīn. The women then requested privacy. I and some of my companions went out, the relatives remained inside. We thought to ourselves that they need privacy, so we should go and perform ʿishā in the meantime. We then proceeded to perform ʿishā salāh.

I thought that the pangs of death will continue for some time as I had noticed with my son. However, they only lasted for about one and quarter hour. I was reading the tashahhud of my witr salāh when I suddenly perceived a change in my heart. This troubled me. I felt as if I have been left empty. I thought to myself: Is it not what Hadrat Wālā used to speak out repeatedly? He used to say: "When a Qutb al-Irshād passes away, people of perceptive hearts experience a change in their hearts and a decrease in their spiritual condition. The reason for this is that such a personality's blessings pervade all, even if they do not perceive where it is coming from. In fact, it is not necessary for even the Qutb al-Irshād to have knowledge of the transfer of blessings. It is like the light of the sun which reaches everyone even though the sun may not intend it." On thinking of this statement, the thought certainly crossed my mind that the reason for the change in my heart is that Hadrat Wālā is on the verge of departing from this world. I thought this because I was still thinking that he is still in the pangs of death. Then I thought that no, he is still alive because he is still in the pangs. Why am I experiencing this effect from before hand? The answer which came to my mind is that although he has not departed as yet and is still in the pangs of death, because his focus is lost, it is possible that its effect is like the one which occurs at the time of death. However, when I completed my salāh and rushed to his house, I learnt that he had breathed his last just five minutes before. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

At the time, the thought crossed my mind that the unique change which I perceived while I was in tashahhud may well be the exact time when Hadrat Wālā's soul left him. This is because about that amount of time must have passed from the time I completed my salāh and rushed to his house. I perceived that change to such a level that after completing my salāh I was severely distressed and said silently to myself: "O Allāh! How will my īmān remain safe if my condition remains like this after Hadrat Wālā?" I seriously feared losing my īmān.

When I went inside and my eyes fell on his blessed face, I spontaneously and unwittingly remarked: "Oh! Glory to Allāh! What a sweet and manly life you lived! May Allāh reward you."

Hadrat Wālā lived with the same grandeur and eminence until the very end. I then proceeded tremblingly towards his head

side, kissed his blessed forehead and touched my fingertips to my lips and then my eyes. I had never seen anyone kissing the forehead of a deceased person. Thus, later on I had some misgiving over this audaciousness of mine. I thought to myself: I hope my act was not considered to be disrespectful and did not offend anyone. However, many days later, Janāb Maulānā ʿAbd al-Latīf Sāhib, the Nāzim of the madrasah at Sahāranpūr, delivered a talk at Hadrat Wālā's house. He spoke on the verse:

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ

Muhammad is but a Messenger…

Without intending a similarity, it was the first time I heard of the incident that Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* had kissed the blessed forehead of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the same way. When I heard this, it not only put me at ease but also brought me immense joy. Later on I learnt that a few other ʿulamā' relatives of Hadrat Wālā had also done the same thing. The misgiving which I had in this regard was removed.

At the time when Hadrat Wālā was experiencing the pangs of death, his junior wife noticed that when he breathed heavily, in the web between his index and middle fingers of the right hand a bright light like that of the fire-fly would emanate. Although two lamps were lit in the room, the light which emanated from between his fingers would overpower the light of the lamps. When he breathed out, the light would disappear.

Initially she thought that because it is the monsoon season, it is overcast and drizzling, so a fire-fly probably came in and is sitting there. Since it was not a harmful animal, she did not even try to remove it. However, when she observed this for quite some time, she showed it to the other women who were present to affirm whether she is imagining it or whether there is certainly a light emanating from there. They all looked and affirmed what she had noticed. When Hadrat Wālā breathed his last, the light disappeared and was not seen again.

On hearing this strange incident, a senior ʿālim who was also a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā gave a delicate explanation which was approved by all. He said: "It is not far-fetched to say that the light appeared from there because phenomenal branches of knowledge, intricate facts and information emanated from

between those two fingers when he was writing all his books and other written works. This light is probably on account of it. Allāh *taʿālā* alone knows the reality."

A short while after Hadrat Wālā's demise, Janāb Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib, who was Hadrat Wālā's nephew, returned from Sahāranpūr with Hadrat Wālā's medicines. He was the one regarding whom Hadrat Wālā had called for several times in order to relay something about the Khānqāh to him. But now there was nothing to which he could return – neither the illness is present nor the patient.

The Maulānā was quite depressed but he had to do what he had to do. He sent Hadrat Wālā's closest associates and relatives to the surrounding areas to convey the message of his passing away so that people do not have cause to complain. However, the next morning he noticed thousands of people approaching from all sides to take part in the janāzah salāh and the burial. The news spread from one to the other, and within the night itself, all the surrounding villages and towns came to know of this tragedy. Although people were sent from Thānah Bhawan only close to midnight, the news spread extremely fast. Why should the news not spread so fast, after all it was the demise of the beloved of the world and the leader of the world [of that time].

Maulānā [Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib] immediately proceeded to the graveyard which Hadrat Wālā had requested and whose historical name was Qabrastān ʿIshq Bāzān. He was accompanied by Maulānā ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib Gumthalwī to demarcate the spot for Hadrat Wālā's burial. He also informed other relatives and attendants of his thoughts. On reaching the graveyard, the two unanimously decided on a spot where Hadrat Wālā is presently buried. It is a most suitable spot in every respect and is liked by whoever sees it.

There were many attendants throughout the night. The next morning, several ʿulamā' and righteous personalities participated in the bathing of the deceased which was done in total compliance to the Sunnah under the supervision of the principal of the Khānqāh, Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib. Onlookers were watching with remorse and thinking to themselves that this was the bed on which Hadrat Wālā used to lie down, meet visitors and honour us with his statements; and now he is lying on it lifeless and motionless.

On observing this scene, some people were shedding tears, others were crying in their hearts while yet others were sobbing. First of all, Hadrat Wālā was very thin and frail due to his old age. And now his five-year long chronic illness had reduced him to bones. Hadrat Wālā was carried from there once the bathing and shrouding was completed. The sound of weeping emanated from the house. Others were reading the kalimah. There was a youngster who was known to be not fully in his senses and whom some people referred to as a majdhūb. Hadrat Wālā used to engage in light-hearted humour with him and show a lot of kindness to him. He came in and began reading the kalimah in a loud voice. One of Hadrat Wālā's special attendants had related an incident about this boy to me. The attendant met him in Ambheta so he asked him about Hadrat Wālā. The attendant said that he is ill and getting worse by the day. The boy said: "The Maulānā is now a guest for fifteen days and will pass away after that." Hadrat Wālā passed away on the fourteenth day.

When the janāzah was about to be carried out of the house, there was a slight drizzle. There was a need to place a blanket over the janāzah. It was my good fortune that my blanket acquired the honour of being the last item to cover Hadrat Wālā. This was because my room was right next door to Hadrat Wālā's house. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.

It became extremely difficult to convey the janāzah from the house to the Khānqāh because the large crowd was restless like moths, and most people did not get the opportunity to carry the bier on their shoulders. The janāzah was eventually placed in the Khānqāh and the crowd grew even larger. The Principal Sāhib felt the need to support the bier with two lengths of bamboo, so this was done. In addition to this, several tough men were selected to proceed with the janāzah all the time and not to allow any change in the bearers of the bier. Instead, anyone who wanted to support the bier with his shoulder must do so by coming beneath the lengths of bamboo and not beneath the bier itself.

The janāzah was left in the Khānqāh for some time because they were waiting for the train from Sahāranpūr to arrive. The people occupied themselves in reading the Qur'ān and each person conveyed rewards to the deceased as much as he was inspired to send. In the meantime, the telegram which was

addressed to the Station Master of the main Sahāranpūr station reached him. The telegram stated that in addition to the first train, another special train will be released in which about 400 passengers will arrive solely to attend the janāzah of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. You must immediately inform Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib to wait for its arrival.

The first train reached from Sahāranpūr. It contained countless people who arrived to join the janāzah salāh and burial. It was ascertained from them as well that another special train is on its way with many people who could either not fit in the first train or could not catch it in time because they received the news a bit later. This is because the person who was sent to Sahāranpūr to convey the news had to come back in the next train which left soon after his arrival. In other words, the messenger himself had to rush back. Even after the arrival of the first train, the people had to wait for quite some time but the second train still did not arrive. The Principal Sāhib then felt that the janāzah should be carried to the ʿĪd Gāh. They will wait there for a little longer and perform the janāzah salāh there because of the large crowds.

They then proceeded towards the ʿĪd Gāh. Although it had stopped drizzling, there was a lot of mud on the roads and the way was quite slippery. This required a lot of caution because the crowds were too big and the road was in a bad condition. Although the ʿĪd Gāh is very near, it became very difficult to carry the janāzah there. The Principal Sāhib himself was in front between the two legs of the bier, supporting both the legs on his shoulders, moving forward carefully, and stopping the people from crowding around him. There were pools of water everywhere and the ground was quite uneven. He was not even wearing shoes, his pants were folded up, and his legs and shins were covered in mud. They eventually conveyed the janāzah to the ʿĪd Gāh exhausted and tired. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them with the best of rewards. Āmīn.

On reaching there, they still had to wait for quite some time for the second train. It had stopped drizzling, the sun had reappeared and the sunlight was making things uncomfortable. The few people who had umbrellas were standing under them, but the waiting made it difficult. The clouds began gathering once again and people feared it would start raining. Another

train arrived from Shāhidrah but there was still no sign of the special train. After some time it was learnt that the special train has arrived on the main station, but will only leave there when this second train reaches. Furthermore, it had to load goods, so it will depart for the sub-station after quite some time.

Bearing in mind all this information and the already lengthy period of waiting, they were forced to make the decision that they will not wait any longer. The janāzah salāh was then performed under the imāmat of Janāb Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib, the nephew of Hadrat Wālā.

Another major challenge which presented itself after the janāzah salāh was that of ziyārat (seeing the face of the deceased) because people in general were insisting on it. The fear of the crowd rushing forward did not give anyone the courage to permit this. The Principal Sāhib was eventually forced to announce: "If this is going to be the situation, I will be forced to stop the ziyārat completely." People then moved away slightly from the janāzah and the pushing and shoving subsided a bit. A few people then surrounded the janāzah, held their hands together and formed a sort of barrier so that people remain outside the circle, look at the face of the deceased from there and make way for others. There was a need to ensure that those who come forward to look, do not stand there for too long, and the same people do not come for a second look so that the weak, the strong, the juniors and seniors – everyone gets a chance. The Principal Sāhib's excellent arrangement enabled this stage to be passed in an excellent manner.

A few strong and enthusiastic persons who left the train at the main station and came here were fortunate to be able to join in the janāzah salāh and to see the face of the deceased. However, they were very few. The majority came by train and only reached at the time of the burial. Some joined in filling the grave while others reached after the burial. Everyone was in the graveyard when those of the second train also reached. They were all able to join in the du'ā'.

They were very disappointed at missing the janāzah salāh and the opportunity of seeing the face of the deceased. However, others felt even more sorry for them because they had left with so much concern but the shortcoming on the part of the railway people caused them to be deprived [of the janāzah

salāh]. Had a little care been taken, the train could have reached on time and ought to have reached on time. Anyway, they probably had certain rules and regulations to follow. Nevertheless, everyone certainly received the reward for attending, and an additional reward for their failure and expressing this remorse.

By virtue of Hadrat Wālā's beautiful end, may Allāh *taʿālā* bless all those who attended the burial with the eternal treasure of a good end. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless them with Jannatul Firdaus with Hadrat Wālā on the basis of their love for Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

The difficulties which were faced in carrying the janāzah from the Khānqāh to the ʿĪd Gāh were also faced when carrying it from the ʿĪd Gāh to the graveyard. I had a pimple on my back and it was becoming extremely difficult to save it from getting rubbed in the course of the pushing and shoving of the crowds. It was difficult to even reach the lengths of bamboo to which the bier was fastened and I could lend my shoulder to them only superficially. Sometimes I would just be able to touch the bamboos and would then kiss my hands. I considered this to be a boon. I found it very difficult to throw sand into the grave. I was protecting the injury on my back with one hand while being pushed by the crowd. Trying to save myself from slipping in the mud was another challenge.

My shoe slipped off my feet and putting them on was another major difficulty. I eventually asked the Principal Sāhib to help me. He steered me and conveyed me to the graveyard. Another person was scooping handfuls of soil and passing them to me, which I used to fill the grave. I recall the condition of a non-ʿālim who was overcome by his emotions. He said: "I tried my utmost to throw sand on Hadrat Wālā's grave but could not pluck the courage. I thought to myself: How can I throw sand on his grave? My heart did not allow me to do it."

Later on I heard from an ʿālim that a few Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* who were overtaken by extreme respect had the same thoughts about throwing sand on the grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

This treasure-house of knowledge and spiritual sciences was conveyed in the form of a corpse of academic pearls to the ground, everyone dusted their hands and then stood up to

make duʿā’. They then bid farewell to him forever, lowered their heads after mid-day, and returned silently to their homes with absolute sorrow and grief. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Oh! That sun has set whose setting was conveyed to us by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream which was seen by a pious woman exactly six months before. The dream will be related in the next section.

This tragic news spread gradually to the entire country. Some people learnt of it through letters, others by conversations with people and yet others from the newspapers. All the newspapers paid special attention to this news, spoke highly of Hadrat Wālā’s academic and practical excellences, and expressed their sorrow and grief over this irreparable loss.

In short, no sooner people received the news, they began coming [to Thānah Bhawan]. This continued for many days. Hadrat Wālā had strictly warned us against informing people about his illness. Therefore, the last visit remained a remorseful one for many. Despite Hadrat Wālā’s prohibition, a large number of people used to come towards the end. The people of Delhi and surrounding areas were very disappointed, in fact they complained, and said: “You could have informed us through such and such means. Had you informed us, thousands of Muslims from Delhi would have taken the golden opportunity of joining in the burial.” Anyway, whatever was bound to happen happened. I conveyed these sentiments in my poem:

> Do not ask what happened and why it happened. Whatever happened and how ever it happened, happened for the best.
>
> Of what good is there if it is against my wishes and according to the wishes of the Beloved?

This brings me to the end of this section on the conditions which surrounded the sad demise of Hadrat Wālā. I now present four themes as addendums in order to complete the benefit of this section. They are: (1) Glad Tidings in The Form of Dreams. (2) A Few Devoted And Special Servants. (3) Consolation. This is followed by a few historical episodes some of which have been touched upon in the discussion on the conditions surrounding Hadrat Wālā’s demise. This will be

followed by selected poems which were composed and sent to me by certain personalities.[1]

Glad Tidings In The Form of Dreams

Hadrat Wālā's Dīnī services which are as bright and glittering as the sun at mid-day are more than enough to prove his high rank and position. There is no need for any additional proof. As the saying goes:

> The mere appearance of the sun is proof of its existence.

By Allāh's will, our Hadrat Wālā was a sun and most of what I have been relating was about this sun, and – Allāh willing – I will continue doing so. However, now that I have completed this, I will relate a few dreams which were seen by some righteous people. These are related solely to divert the minds of the associates of Hadrat Wālā because such a diversion is necessary at times of grief and sorrow. Although dreams cannot be used as proofs and evidences, the Hadīth refers to true dreams as *mubashshirāt* – glad tidings. As per a statement of Hadrat Wālā, they naturally and essentially have the element of bringing contentment and satisfaction. This cannot be denied because it is observed most of the time. Hadrat Wālā himself related certain special dreams in a collection titled *Sidq ar-Ru'yā*. I commence with quoting one specific dream from this collection.

A high-ranking woman who was affiliated to Hadrat Wālā saw a dream six months before his demise. This was at a time when there was no reason to have such thoughts [of Hadrat Wālā's departure from this world]. Her dream with Hadrat Wālā's reply is quoted from *Sidq ar-Ru'yā*.

The Dream

I saw a dream two or three days ago. I saw myself going to a certain place where a function was held. The carpets and other items for that function were present, but the function itself had ended. The carpets and other items were being carried away. I saw a person and asked him what was happening. He replied:

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[1] All these themes will not translated into English. Only those which would be of interest and suited to the English reader will be translated – inshā Allāh. (translator)

"Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was present here." I asked: "What was Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* saying? Did he say anything?" The person replied: "Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: 'Consider Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī as a setting sun.'" I interpreted the dream that Allāh *taʿālā* will – out of His grace – give you long life. However, ever since I saw this dream, I am experiencing some sort of worry in my heart.

Reply

There is nothing to be worried about. It does not contain any word which demonstrates that the time has drawn near. Even if we were to accept that it contains such a word, then the word "near" cannot be specified. The Qur'ān refers to the Resurrection as being near, but it has not taken place as yet. It is possible that the objective of this theme is to advise the person not to delay in acquiring Dīn. The person must be conscious of this nearness.

This was with regard to the dream itself. I need to give a reply to a misgiving or misunderstanding. An ummatī [referring to himself] is referred to as a sun while the Sahābah are referred to as stars. This could be misconstrued as according superiority to an ordinary ummatī over the Sahābah. The point of comparison is different in each place. Furthermore, the point of similarity between the stars and the Sahābah is the large number of both, and the point of similarity between an ummatī and the sun is that of singularity [both are one]. This is why I said that the point of comparison in each is different. Another Hadīth compares the Sahābah to the Prophets and angels, before whom the sun – in fact, the heavens – are totally insignificant. There is therefore no room for this misunderstanding. 20 Muharram 1362 A.H.

The above reply is dated 20th Muharram and the lady said that she saw the dream two or three days ago. It was the practice of Hadrat Wālā to write replies on the day he received a letter. It must have taken two days for the letter to reach. So it must have been written on the 18th. Two or three days before that [when she saw the dream] would mean that she saw the dream on the 15th or 16th of Muharram. Hadrat Wālā passed away on the night of the 15th/16th of Rajab. According to this calculation, the dream was seen exactly six months before.

What a clear dream it was wherein Hadrat Wālā was referred to as a sun.

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One week before Hadrat Wālā's demise, the imām of a masjid in Punjab who was very regular in performing the tahajjud salāh saw a dream. There was a large crowd of people and a janāzah was placed before them. He asked about what this was all about and was told that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* had passed on. This was the janāzah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The imām related this dream to a few scholars who gave the interpretation that it seems as though a very senior 'ālim is to pass away soon. When they heard about Hadrat Wālā's demise one week later, they immediately made mention of their interpretation of the dream and said that we have now concluded that this was in fact its interpretation.

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The imām of another masjid in Punjab is a Sayyid and a student of Hadrat Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib. Two nights before or after Hadrat Wālā's demise, he saw the word جناح written in the sky. A few moments later, the word قد appeared before the previous word. Thereafter, the word كُسِرَ appeared between the two. Then the word الاسلام appeared in the end. The complete sentence will read:

قَدْ كُسِرَ جَنَاحُ الْإِسْلَامِ

The wing of Islam has broken.

He was quite worried when he woke up and did not know what this was all about. He then read about Hadrat Wālā's demise in the newspapers and immediately concluded that this is the interpretation of his dream.

What doubt can there be in this regard? after all, Hadrat Wālā's being really strengthened Islam. He was certainly a strong support for Islam.

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A mujāz-e-suhbat saw Hadrat Wālā in a dream wherein he was conducting a Hadīth lesson. A special attendant of Hadrat Wālā

was reading the Ahādīth while Hadrat Wālā was explaining. Hadrat Wālā also seated the one who saw this dream close to him. In the dream itself he saw Hadrat Wālā saying: "Bhāi! I am going soon. There is very little time. Read everything." Or he said: "Read whatever has to be read." It seems as though Hadrat Wālā is entirely immersed in the Qur'ān and Hadīth, or he spent his entire life in teaching the Qur'ān and Hadīth. He appears to be an embodiment of light.

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A senior scholar and khalīfah had come about a week or ten days before and then continued to another place. On the same night that he passed away, this scholar saw a dream in which Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib said to him: "Hadrat Maulānā has recovered completely." He certainly recovered completely.

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Based on the confidence and extreme respect which a special associate and mujāz-e-suhbat had in his heart for Hadrat Wālā, he was experiencing a conflict his heart as regards seeking forgiveness for Hadrat Wālā. He saw himself present in the Khānqāh, Hadrat Wālā appeared suddenly and said: "Continue making du'ā' for my good health." This was a way of removing his conflict from the unseen.

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There is another dream which brought a lot of contentment to me and still does. A distant relative who received Western education and had an office position saw at his place of employment, on the night following Hadrat Wālā's demise – i.e. between Wednesday and Thursday – that Hadrat Wālā is immensely happy. In fact, he is so happy that his blessed face has turned red out of joy. He seems to be in a state of ecstasy like an intoxicated person and is singing a Persian couplet in a beautiful tone. My relative recalled the couplet when he woke up but forgot some of it subsequently. He tried recalling it and came up with the following words:

> Those who offer themselves to the dagger of submission receive a fresh life every moment.

However, he cannot say with certainty that this was in fact the couplet. Its theme applies completely, i.e. he was extremely surprised at seeing Hadrat Wālā in this state of ecstasy

because Hadrat Wālā was never attached to things of this nature, and thought to himself: "What has happened to him today?" The moment he woke up, he said to his friend who was sleeping nearby: "Bhāi! I saw this dream just now. The only interpretation which is coming to my mind is that Hadrat has passed away because such joy and happiness can only be experienced by a walī of Allāh *taʿālā* at the time of death." This was affirmed later on.

On hearing this dream, I spontaneously read the following couplets which Hadrat Wālā himself used to read very often with absolute enthusiasm:

> I will be delighted the day I leave these ruins. I will find the comfort of my heart and I will follow the beloved. I have vowed that if I ever get this agony (of love) then right until I reach the gates of the beloved I will go in excitement singing away (the praises of Allāh *taʿālā*).

If Hadrat Wālā did not experience this happiness, who else could? After all, he spent an entire life with this fear and concern as to how his end will be. Everything centres around this, and no one knows about it. Whenever this used to be discussed, complete and total fear and dread used to be noticed on him. In short, he was always worried about this. If an erudite personality like him had so much fear and is then rest assured about his Hereafter, then who can be more happy than him?

May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us all with the best end through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā and honour us with eternal companionship with him in Paradise. Āmīn.

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A woman who is very closely related to Hadrat Wālā saw a dream just two days before his demise. On seeing the dream, she became so fearful over Hadrat Wālā's life that she awakened her husband immediately. He consoled her by saying: "You ought to rejoice because Allāh *taʿālā* showed Paradise to you." When her dream was related among the house people, they all began to cry.

The dream which she had is as follows: There is a large building which is surrounded by rivers and orchards. There are

thousands and thousands of people in the building – men, women, children and even animals. And more people are descending into it from the skies. Someone said that these are angels. Everyone is in prostration, even the animals. Each creation went into prostration as they came into the house and then departed. She asked: "What is this? How come the salāh is being performed in this way?" Someone replied: "Don't you know? Salāh is being performed for the janāzah that is placed in the centre of the house."

When she looked at the janāzah, it was covered with a black sheet similar to the one which Hadrat Wālā used to wrap around his body. Such and such special associates who used to be in Hadrat Wālā's assemblies most of the time said: "It is not right for the women to intermingle with the men." The women were made to stand between two screens while the special associates were holding the screens…(the remaining portion of the dream is not related to Hadrat Wālā, it was therefore not considered appropriate to relate it here – compiler).

As per my own temperament, I consider this to be a physical expression of Hadrat Wālā being a leader of the world. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best. Furthermore, Hadrat Wālā used to interpret the colour black to refer to self-obliteration. The fact that he enjoyed these two ranks [leadership and self-obliteration] from all his other conditions and stations is more obvious and glaring than the brightness of the day.

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Shāmlī is just two stations away from Thānah Bhawan. The imām of the masjid there who is a very righteous person dreamt of Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* on the night of Hadrat Wālā's demise. He said to him: "Read the kalimah tayyibah." The imām began reading durūd sharīf. He said: "No, this is the time to read kalimah tayyibah." He asked: "Why?" He said: "You will come to know in the morning." The very next morning he received the news of Hadrat Wālā's demise. He left Shāmlī immediately and joined the janāzah salāh and burial.

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The following incident occurred not very long before Hadrat Wālā's demise at a time when he was suffering from bouts of drowsiness. One day, after dictating replies to letters after

zuhr, he felt drowsy. He then got up suddenly and said: "I just felt as if an envelope is placed on the bed with the name ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz written on it." I said: "It is probably as a result of Hadrat Wālā dictating replies to letters just now." He said: "But why did I see the name ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz?" A foreboding passed my mind and I thought to myself: Is it possible that this is a reference to Hadrat Wālā's age and comprehensiveness? When I inquired, I learnt that Hadrat Shāh [ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz] Sāhib's age was also around the same as Hadrat Wālā's, and as for the similarity in their quality of comprehensives, that is glaring and obvious.

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A very close ʿālim and khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā who was present at the exact time of Hadrat Wālā's death and also took part in the bathing, burial and other arrangements, describes the following in his own words:

> I saw this dream either on the night of Barā'ah or a few nights after it. I saw a very elaborate procession in an extremely large city. On reaching close to the procession, I learnt it was the procession of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat. When the blessed throne itself came close to me, there was a large crowd but I could not see any acquaintance among the crowd. The thought immediately came to me that this is an assembly of angels. I stood respectfully to one side along a wall where the path was turning and a staircase was starting, going up to a very elevated place. When I looked towards the eventual high spot that is to be reached, I thought to myself that this is a special place of attendance. But then the procession came back. Hadrat Wālā's gaze fell on me at that time. This happened when he was still at a distance from where I was standing. When he came closer, he lowered his head in my direction and said: "I am not feeling any weakness now. We are just moving around out of happiness."

What he meant was that although I am sitting on a throne and being carried on the shoulders of others, it is not because I am weak and cannot walk, rather we are moving around in happiness. He made the first statement [I am not feeling any weakness now] in a special tone which marked an emphatic

negation, and the second statement by lowering his head and saying it with a smile.

I recall one of Hadrat Wālā's statements on the subject of negating any weakness.

A very old and close relative of Hadrat Wālā passed away just two months before Hadrat Wālā's demise. This elder was very thin, and his lengthy period of illness had completely reduced him to bones – similar to how Hadrat Wālā had become towards the end. I said to Hadrat Wālā [with reference to his old and close relative]: "Nothing but bones remained in him, and he had a strange type of awe in him." Hadrat Wālā said: "Yes, what is there that is left in the body! The actual thing in the body is the soul. It does not undergo any change. It remains in its original condition."

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A mujāz-e-bay'at who has a special affinity with dreams saw two dreams of a unique nature one after the other. I am quoting them in his own words which he wrote on a page and gave to someone who was interested in knowing about them and who is now very particular about keeping this page very safely.

> The First Dream: It was the 16th of Rajab, a Wednesday night (i.e. the night following Hadrat Wālā's burial) when I saw Hadrat in a dream after midnight. He said: "Do not consider me to be dead; I am alive. Just as you used to derive benefit from me during my life, you must continue taking benefit so that you continue receiving benefit. I was conferred with the station of martyrs." Or he said: "I was conferred the station of presence [of Allāh *ta'ālā*]." He then recited a verse which I cannot recall. What I do recall is that it contains the words *shuhadā'* and *siddīqīn.* A verse of this nature is to be found in the fifth rukū' of the fifth pārā/juz of the Qur'ān.
>
> مَنْ يُّطِعِ اللهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ فَاُولٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ وَالصِّدِّيْقِيْنَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِيْنَ وَحَسُنَ اُولٰئِكَ رَفِيْقًا.
>
> *Whoever obeys the order of Allāh and His Messenger, then they are with those whom Allāh favoured: They*

are the Prophets, the truthful ones, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent is their company.[1]

I then woke up and fell asleep again. I saw the same dream again. I woke and fell asleep again. When I woke up again, the following words were on my tongue: "It must be said." When Hadrat said: "you must continue taking benefit so that you continue receiving benefit", the thought came with certainty in my heart that he is referring to a study of his written works, especially his *Malfūẕāt*.

The Second Dream: It was eight days after Hadrat Wālā's demise and close to the time of true dawn when I saw another dream. I saw myself in a certain madrasah. Hadrat Wālā came in and said: "You have not conveyed that message as yet. I have been waiting." I replied: "Hadrat, my memory is so weak that I cannot remember things." I began crying after I said this. Hadrat said: "One ought to carry out tasks immediately. There has to be a strict adherence to a time table." Hadrat then leaned against a wall and sat down. A child who was sitting nearby began to cry. Hadrat asked the child: "Why are you crying?" The child replied: "He is crying and saying that he cannot remember things. I am crying because I too cannot remember things." Hadrat placed his index finger on his lips and shook his head in my direction to convey the message to me that I should not cry because the child is crying on account of me. I stopped crying and so did the child. I then thought to myself: The message has been conveyed, so what is Hadrat talking about? (he had related it to me and I had related it to others – compiler). Hadrat immediately said: "To the house of my junior wife." I replied: "I will convey it now. I will get a tablet [to write on]." Hadrat asked: "What will you do with the tablet?" I replied: "I will write on it and convey it." Hadrat said: "Very well."

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 69.

> My eyes opened. The next morning I wrote everything on a page and conveyed the details of both dreams to Hadrat Wālā's junior wife. That is all.

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Another close and venerable associate of Hadrat Wālā who is a mujāz-e-suhbat dreamt of Hadrat Wālā on 19 Rajab - the Friday night after Hadrat Wālā's demise, i.e. three nights after his demise. [The dream is as follows]: Hadrat Wālā is alive and sitting cross-legged on his bed. His face is round, he has no beard, his complexion is brownish, and his body is of average size. At the time, Hadrat Wālā is agitated over the point that his beloveds have been informed of his demise while he is still alive. It then seemed as if someone said something to him. As per his habit, he replied: "Of what use is that?" The person who saw the dream then said: "Hadrat, if that is the case, we can inform the people by writing to them." In the dream itself, the person was overjoyed and thought to himself: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā is alive, he has not passed away.

I was extremely satisfied and contented at hearing these two dreams because after Hadrat Wālā's demise, I myself had been reading the following couplets with real enthusiasm and conviction:

> The cloud of mercy is still full of splendour; the house of love and the bottle of love are yet sealed. The one whose heart has become alive with love never dies. Our continuity is confirmed in the map of the world.

I was saying that – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – I am still receiving the blessings of Hadrat Wālā. In fact, by Allāh, I am perceiving more blessings than before and thinking to myself that instead of relaxing in his Khānqāh, Hadrat Wālā is now relaxing in his grave. I am not the only one who is feeling in this way. Several people supported my thoughts and feelings. Some of them are so certain in this regard, they are prepared to take an oath. One person who has an interest in these matters still takes an oath and says: "The phenomenal benefit which I received was derived only after his demise. Why should I not take an oath when I am personally perceiving this within myself and observing it? I consider the blessings which I am

experiencing because of my bond with Hadrat Wālā to be solely an inspiration from Allāh *taʿālā*."

I myself have witnessed this phenomenal benefit after Hadrat Wālā's demise. I composed a couplet with reference to this:

> The manifestations of the predawn are experienced daily in the separation of the evening and night. O embodiment of light! Such is the extent of your remembrance.
>
> The heart is illuminated, the liver is illuminated, the speech is illuminated, the gaze is illuminated. What can I say about the extent of your concern for my cheerless self.

This makes me think of Hadrat Wālā's statement: "When I was leaving Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* to return to India, he said to me: Allāh willing, my benefit and blessings will reach you there [in India] as well because Allāh *taʿālā* alone is the actual conveyer of blessings. The shaykh is merely a means. His name is a manifestation of the Real Guide. There are no restrictions of time and place for Allāh's blessings."

All these feelings and emotions must certainly be considered to be assumptions. Misunderstanding must not be allowed to occur because the oath that is taken is an oath on the existence of the person's feeling and perception, and not that it is really and genuinely on its factualness. Hadrat Wālā's investigation in this regard will be quoted further on.

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A mujāz-e-suhbat was so affected by Hadrat Wālā's demise that he would repeatedly say in a state of restlessness and spontaneity: "O my shaykh! O my shaykh!" He felt even more despondent and afflicted because he felt: "I have been left incomplete, to whom can I go to perfect myself now?"

He personally used to relate to me: "These thoughts were certainly passing through my mind. When I went to his grave, the same sadness and remorse were in my heart. After a short while, the following satisfaction came into my heart that – Allāh willing – my rectification will be completed and perfected. My heart immediately experienced peace and tranquillity after this."

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Another mujāz-e-bayʿat who is from among the distinguished ʿulamā' and also from among those who were appointed to write two manzils on Hadrat Wālā's book, *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān ʿalā Masā'il Abī Hanīfah an-Nuʿmān*, used to relate to me that in the course of writing the book he came to a place which needed a few years of research for explaining it and for which he had wanted to obtain a solution from Hadrat Wālā himself when the latter was still alive. However, because he had to present many books to Hadrat Wālā whose health could not have borne all this, he did not get an opportunity to obtain a solution. Anyway, somehow or the other he was forced to write something on the subject but his heart was never satisfied with what he wrote. He tore up what he wrote, his heart became apprehensive, and he recalled Hadrat Wālā's following rank:

> O the meeting of you who has an answer for every difficult question! You have a solution for everything without any hesitation.

While in this state of perplexity and remorse, he went to Hadrat Wālā's grave as per his habit. The same thought passed his mind there as well. Subsequently, by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, when he sat down once again to write on the subject, the difficulty and objection which he had been experiencing were so easily and satisfactory solved that there remained no misgiving and hesitation, and he wrote on the subject immediately. He used to say: "It was a doubt which had been experienced for several years. When it was solved all at once, I was so overjoyed that I did not get sleep for the entire night. Previously I was intensely grieved at not knowing to whom I could go for the solution of this doubt. Now that it was solved, I was at a loss as to who I could go to share my joy."

I said to him: "You should convey its reward to the victorious soul of Hadrat Wālā. Allāh willing, he will be happy in his grave." My suggestion really appealed to him and he conveyed its reward immediately to Hadrat Wālā.

Obtaining blessings from the graves of righteous people has been recorded from elders of the Ahl al-Haq. Here in the Khānqāh itself is the grave of a very famous scholar by the name of Qādī Muhammad ʿAlī, the author of *Kashshāf az-*

Zunūn ʿan Istilihāt al-Funūn. It is a recorded practice of the elders that if a student cannot memorize his lesson or is unable to solve an academic doubt from any book, then by studying the book near the grave, he – by and large – is able to learn the lesson or solve the doubt. I myself heard this narration from Hadrat Wālā.

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One of the ʿulamā' who had been appointed to write sections of *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān* saw a dream. He relates: Hadrat Wālā was seated in his outer room. He read the first verse of Sūrah Yā Sīn. He then pointed towards me and I began explaining the verse. Subsequently, through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, the work [of writing this book] which I was finding extremely difficult became easy and I was feeling satisfied and confident. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. The work is now progressing at a good pace and the subject matter and themes are coming into my mind. O Allāh! Give me more progress. May Allāh *taʿālā* continue helping me to complete this task which has been delegated to me in the best way possible."

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A very righteous person from the Khānqāh saw a dream in which Hadrat Wālā instructed him to seek the advice of the Jānāb Principal Sāhib – i.e. Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib – in administrative affairs. When the man took the Principal's advice and presented it before Hadrat Wālā, the latter said: "He holds the rank of senior teachers in matters of this nature. He is absolutely certain in these matters, there is no guess work with him."

He is certainly running the Madrasah and the Khānqāh with a sound administration, he is very enthusiastic, administering everything according to Hadrat Wālā's style and temperament, and is upholding everything as normal. There is a lot of confidence in him and it is hoped that – Allāh willing – he will maintain all administrative affairs according to the bequest and temperament of Hadrat Wālā.

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I now conclude with this duʿā' that all of us – the attendants of Hadrat Wālā who have been left without a head – continually benefit from Hadrat Wālā's spirituality, to protect us against

every corrupt belief and action through Hadrat Wālā's blessings, and to keep us even more attentive to and steadfast on the teachings and guidelines of Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

Testimonies Of People

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's academic, practical and spiritual excellences are glaring like the midday sun and well known. They do not need any testimonials, especially those of people. However, a Hadīth of *Sahīh Bukhārī wa Muslim* was said for occasions like this:

انتم شهداء الله في الأرض

You are Allāh's witnesses on earth.

This shows that when people in general speak highly of a person who has passed away, then it is expected that he was good in Allāh's sight as well because as per Rasūlullāh's statement:

انتم شهداء الله في الأرض

Ordinary people are also Allāh's witnesses on earth.

The same theme is conveyed in another Hadīth as follows:

إن لله ملائكة تنطق على ألسنة بني آدم بما في في المؤمن الخير والشر (فتح الباري: ج٣\١٨٣)

Allāh taʿālā has appointed certain angels to speak good or bad of a believer through the words of people.

Furthermore, when lovers hear the praises of their beloved from everyone, they feel happy. This happiness is essential at the time of grief. Thus, from the countless incidents and writings which we heard and read, I will present a few to serve as examples.

All the Muslim groups in the country – including those who had certain political or creedal differences with Hadrat Wālā – almost all of them have unanimously perceived this major loss. Consolatory assemblies and gatherings were held in numerous places. Speeches were delivered, and some speakers and even the audience were left sobbing. Resolutions were passed and special prayer gatherings were conducted. Some madāris were closed. In fact, some people even closed their businesses. In certain places people did not have the courage to close their

shops out of fear that they might be committing an impermissible act. This, despite the fact that they were free to do as they wished. However, the personality of Hadrat Wālā had such an effect on them that they themselves were very cautious in matters related to Hadrat Wālā and could not act against what caution demanded. Most places had assemblies for the conveying of rewards to the deceased.

We received information from Pānīpat that 32 or 34 Qur'ān recitations were completed. There are many huffāz there. Several places conveyed rewards to the deceased by distributing food. In short, everyone – each according to his thinking and beliefs – expressed their grief and conveyed rewards. All national newspapers, including non-Muslim newspapers, published this news with due importance. In fact, I was informed that a non-Muslim newspaper was the first to give coverage to this information in a very beautiful manner.

When I read some of the articles published by newspapers on the excellent qualities of Hadrat Wālā, I was astounded at how they must have acquired all this information. It was as if those who wrote the articles were fully aware of Hadrat Wālā's qualities and were his associates, whereas they had no association with him. In fact, some of those writers held differing views from those of Hadrat Wālā.

Why should this not be the case when Allāh *taʿālā* had honoured Hadrat Wālā with adoration and general acceptance. And as per the above quoted Hadīth, the angels were causing the people to make these statements. Whatever they said or wrote were true facts from beginning to end, as will be displayed in some of the forthcoming quotations. In fact, we could say that those writers made our task easy and provided us with the gist of Hadrat Wālā's life in very short, brief, concise and comprehensive articles. We are further grateful to them and pray for them because if we were to say the same things, it would possibly be construed as biased information from the associates of Hadrat Wālā. When unconnected people sing such praises of him, none can doubt them.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them on our behalf and on behalf of all Muslims with the best of rewards in this world and in the Hereafter.

Anyone who heard of Hadrat Wālā's illness would make duʿā' for him and express this hope: "He is a very great person. May Allāh *taʿālā* cure him quickly." Even non-Muslims uttered similar sentiments.

There was a very old Muslim man who had not even met Hadrat Wālā. When he heard of his demise, he broke down and began crying profusely. He said: "What can I say about him! Previously when we needed to find out a ruling, we would go around searching for someone but could not find anyone to teach it to us. But now even the female servants in our house are able to refer to *Bahishtī Zewar* and teach us the ruling."

Some newspapers went to the extent of saying that if the Maulānā [Hadrat Wālā] had registered [copyrighted] his written works and published them himself, he would have left behind at least 40-50 lakhs of rupees [one lakh is 100 000]

Different newspapers described him in different ways:

- He was a unique and unparalleled personality. The world cannot produce a similar personality for centuries.
- Some of his written works are matchless, the like of which cannot be found even among the scholars of the past.
- The Maulānā did not leave behind any children. His children are his many books.

I will now quote sections from a few newspapers which are presently with me. The periodical *al-Burhān* from Delhi dated August 1943 A.H. writes on this incident as follows:

Oh! Hakīmul Ummat

Death is destined for everything which has appeared in this temporary world wearing the borrowed garment of life. However, just as there are differences in the lives of people, there are differences in the manner in which they die. Sometimes you get a death which is not the death of just a person or individual, rather it results in the tottering of the edifice of life of thousands of people who are connected to the deceased by their faith and confidence in him. Furthermore, mourning the death of such a person is not restricted to the shedding of merely a few tears. Rather, the peacefulness of thousands of hearts is reduced to a sorrowful hopelessness.

The lamp of hopes and wishes is extinguished. The burning embers of energetic and enthusiastic life turn cold. It seems as though this tragic incident has reduced everything in this world to sorrow and dejection. An Arab poet had said in reference to a similar death:

وما كان قيس هلكا هلكا واحدا – ولكنه بنيان قومٍ تهدما

The death of Qays was not the death of a single person. Rather it was the edifice of a nation which was demolished.

Last July – between the 19th and 20th of July at about 10pm. – the passing away of Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib Thānwī was a similar tragedy [as described above].

While Hadrat Maulānā was an eminent scholar of the Sharīʿah on one hand, he held a distinguished position in the field of the Tarīqah and sulūk. He was a treasure house of external and internal sciences. More than knowledge of the external, his essential jewel was knowledge of the internal. His writings were mines of knowledge and virtue and his speeches were intensively effective. When he considered something to be the truth, he said it openly and practised on it without fearing the criticism of anyone.

Although he was a dervish in solitude, his court was faithfully respected by very affluent and wealthy people, and men of knowledge and virtue. Whatever he said and did was with sincerity and integrity. Worldly prominence and popularity and monetary greed and covetousness probably did not even pass by near his heart. He held on so firmly and resolutely to his principles, beliefs and thoughts that no power in the world could divert him from them.

Hadrat's court was such a pure fountain of cognition and spirituality that thousands of thirsty souls would come and leave fully satiated. Those whose lives were spent in the filth and grime of sin and disobedience would leave from here pure and clean, having filled themselves with hope and focus on the real objective.

His life was a living lesson of following the Sunnah, and his speech was a valuable register containing the mysteries and subtleties of the Tarīqah. A group of Indian ʿulamā' always differed with him on certain issues. However, his piety, purity, deep understanding of Dīn, expertise and insightfulness in the

sciences of the Sharīʿah, proclamation of the truth, sincere actions, turning to Allāh *taʿālā*, untainted service to Dīn, selfless instruction of rectitude and guidance are those lofty qualities and praiseworthy virtues which were equally accepted by friend and foe.

Through his sound admonishments and many written works, the phenomenal services which Hadrat rendered in the rectification of beliefs and actions and the denunciation of baseless customs and innovations is probably his most unique distinguishing mark among all his contemporaries. The nation accorded him the title of "Hakīmul Ummat" and was most correct in according it to him. The fact of the matter is that Hadrat provided such an effective treatment for the spiritual maladies of thousands of people through his writings and speeches that those who were broken earthen vessels became glittering pearls, and those who were mere brass became pure gold.

As per the latest count, Hadrat written works – small and big – number over 800. Many of his written works have been so widely accepted in the country that they have already gone through dozens of editions. It is said – there is probably no exaggeration in this – that the value of his works which have been published until now is no less than 40-50 lakh rupees. What can be a greater proof of Hadrat's generosity, big-heartedness, and sincerity that despite the extra-ordinary acceptance of his works, he never exercised any exclusive rights of publishing and printing any of his books. Every person had open permission to publish and print them.

The reality is that just this one act of Hadrat is an admonitory lesson for the many celebrated ʿulamā' in our time of materialism. Furthermore, his writings are not specifically for one class of people. The ʿulamā', scholars, men of the Sharīʿah, people inclined to the Tarīqah, men and women, people with the highest education, and the ordinary Urdu reader can benefit from his works and obtain the means for his internal and external rectification.

In addition to wisdoms and fine intricate points in his works, they contain unique and unparalleled logical and rational proofs from whose affirmation and verification even the most senior opponent cannot find an escape. No matter what he explains, he does it with absolute confidence and conviction.

His writings and speeches were reflections of his extraordinary intelligence and astuteness. Progressing from one point to the next and recognizing the reality of every matter were special jewels of his acumen.

For the elite he wrote *Tafsīr Bayān al-Qur'ān* and the commentary to the *Mathnawī* of Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh*. For the women there is *Bahishtī Zewar*. These are most valuable and popular works which, based on their peculiar subject matter, there is no equal in Urdu religious literature. As for the last mentioned work [*Bahishtī Zewar*], there is probably no Urdu-knowing person in India who at least did not hear its name.

The Maulānā's blessed birth was on 5 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1280 A.H. Based on this, he was about 83 years old. A detailed biography on his life titled *Ashraf as-Sawānih* was already published during his lifetime in two huge volumes. The honour of writing this work went to the well-known poet and scholar of the Urdu language, Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib Majdhūb and Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq Sāhib. Although Hadrat Maulānā has passed on, he is still alive today by virtue of his written works and practical achievements. Fortunate indeed are those who acquire illumination from his living treasures and tread the straight path of Islam through their guidance.

May Allāh *taʿālā* elevate the ranks of Maulānā among the Aʿlā ʿIllīyyīn because he spent his entire life calling people towards this path, and may He resurrect him with the Siddīqīn and obedient ones because he lived his life as a content and trustworthy believer. May Allāh *taʿālā* shower him with abundant mercies.

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Another newspaper writes:

News about the passing away of Hakīm al-Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* have been published in all newspapers of the country. The Maulānā's terrifying departure took place at a time when his presence was most needed. General corruption, impiety and degeneration are to be seen everywhere. There are still thousands of people who are restless when it comes to their rectification and success in the fields of character and customs. Hadrat Maulānā was an exemplar of past scholars in our present age. He was a selfless

rectifier of character and actions. The extensive manner in which masses were rectified through the Maulānā is unparalleled in our times. You will see a faultless example of caution and perfection in his life from beginning to end. How and when will this critical loss ever be repaired? He was ardently attached to teaching the Qur'ān, conveying its message, and ensuring its correct recitation. Hadrat's academic blessings encompassed all sections of the community – the 'ulamā', the righteous, women, children, the masses, the elite, the rich and the poor. He wrote countless books from his heart without ever thinking of personal monetary gain. He dedicated everything to the ummah, and everything remains such to this day. We pray that Hadrat continues enjoying the bounty of remaining in the shade of Allāh's mercy forever, and that future generations are not deprived of his blessings. We make du'ā' for patience and peace for all of Hadrat's relatives and disciples. May Allāh *ta'ālā* confer all Hadrat's associates with patience. Āmīn.

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Look at what another newspaper writes:

It was tragic news for the Muslims of India to learn of the demise of Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* in his hometown Thānah Bhawan. He was a living example of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum*. Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Sāhib Thānwī was from among those practising 'ulamā' of India who are born after centuries and whose loss can never be compensated. We are of the view that India will not be able to make up for this loss even in the next 500 years. Together with being a distinguished scholar, Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī was a powerful spiritual leader. His entire life was spent in the service of Islam and Muslims. He rendered a phenomenal service to the Muslims of India by providing an idiomatic translation of the Qur'ān and writing a tafsīr like *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, and thereby expounding those fine points of the Qur'ān to Indians who were totally ignorant of the Arabic language. In addition to this, he wrote 40-50 authoritative religious books for which no answer can be found in present Islamic literature. The wide acceptance and appeal of Maulānā's translation of the Qur'ān and other books can be gauged from the fact that there is not a single Muslim home in India which does not have the Maulānā's translation or other

books. Although the Maulānā has departed from this world, he has left behind a powerful academic and religious treasure which will guide the Muslims of India until the day of Resurrection. The Maulānā's demise is not an irreparable loss for the Muslims of India alone but for the entire Islamic world. We join the Maulānā's relatives, associates and disciples in this tragic incident.

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Another political newspaper writes:

Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī departed from this world on the night between the 19th and 20th of July at the age of 82. After teaching at Madrasah Fayḏ ʿĀm in Kānpūr, he returned to his hometown, Thānah Bhawan (district Muẕaffar Nagar). This town then became a centre of rectitude and guidance for the whole of India solely through his efforts.

The Maulānā's wisdom, piety and intelligence impressed every level of Muslim society. He enjoys extraordinary popularity as regards his written works. His detailed work, *Bahishtī Zewar*, which is on the subject of Islamic society is well-known. Hundreds and thousands of women learnt about the Islamic way of life through this book and the educational standard of Muslim women increased through it. His commentary to the *Mathnawī* of Maulānā Rūm and his *Bayān al-Qur'ān* for the scholars and elite will always be remembered. His booklets and books in general have enjoyed so much of acceptance and have been printed in such large numbers that as per the statement of such and such Maulānā, their collective value is no less than 4-5 million rupees. Despite the wide acceptance which his works enjoyed, the Maulānā did not reserve any right for himself with respect to any of his books. There was always open permission to publish and print them. The Maulānā's sincerity and open-heartedness can be gauged from this. As per the latest counting of his written works, they total 803.

Although the Maulānā always remained aloof from practical politics, he possessed political vision. He never supported the view that Muslims join the Congress because, no matter what, the Muslim League is a Muslim party. It defends a separate system for Muslims, it claims the rectification and progress of Muslims according to the Islamic way. He supported the view that Muslims should join it as a Muslim group.

The Maulānā was also very popular in India as a lecturer. He travelled extensively throughout India. Thousands of Muslims used to attend his lectures and leave impressed. He has a very large number of murīds. He propagated Islamic teachings extensively in the first half of the fourteenth century through his writings, speeches and personal example. Despite his old age and physical debility, he spent his time in the service of Muslims until the very end. He enjoyed a distinguished position with respect to his personal piety and actions. Although the Maulānā lived a full life, it is unfortunate that this lamp of knowledge and guidance has become extinguished and the assembly of Muslims has been left desolate. May Allāh *taʿālā* forgive Maulānā and elevate his ranks."

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Another newspaper contains a lengthy article from which only the prelude and a few concluding paragraphs are presented to the reader.

The glittering lamp of the night which was fluttering out of weakness and ill-health for several years was finally extinguished on the night of 15 Rajab 1362 A.H. at the age of 82 years, three months and ten days.

In other words, Hakīm al-Ummat Mujaddid Tarīqat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* suffered from weakness and diarrhoea for several months and eventually bid farewell to this temporary abode on the night between the 19th and 20th of July at 10pm at the time of ʿishā. He left hundreds and thousands of his followers, murīds and associates grief-stricken and forlorn. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Now this era has ceased totally which was a reminder of Hadrat Shāh Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī, Maulānā Yaʿqūb Sāhib Nānautwī, Maulānā Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī and Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib Thānwī; and whose self combined the lineages of the Sufi masters of Chisht, Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī and Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Barelwī. Whose heart was a confluence of the oceans of the Chishtī temperament and infatuation, and the Mujaddidī tranquillity and love. Whose tongue was an exposition of the harmony between the Sharīʿah and the Tarīqah. Whose pen had brought about a concord between fiqh and tasawwuf after a lengthy period of mutual

conflict. Whose blessings benefited a world for about half a century through his instruction, training, purification and guidance by the grace and inspiration of Allāh *taʿālā*. Whose writings and speeches exposed the realities of īmān, the intricacies of jurisprudence, the mysteries of Allāh *taʿālā* and matters of divine wisdom. This is why the world referred to him as the Hakīm al-Ummat, the title which was a true reflection of this noblest of people of our era…

As for his mastery in writing, the academics will know that in every written work of his, it was as if all the issues and sources are collectively in front of the author, and that each one is cautiously placed in its appropriate place. Generally what happens is that when an author starts writing on a subject, he sometimes goes to extremes to the extent that other angles on that subject are disregarded. A unique feature of Hadrat's written works is that his pen is cautious on every subject matter, he gives due consideration to each angle, saves himself from extremism, and produces a work which leaves even the scholars completely astounded…

A major achievement regarding Hadrat's revival of the Tarīqah is that it had been – since quite some time – reduced to just a few customs. He purified it from superfluous and extraneous issues, and brought it in line with that of the pious predecessors…

Despite Hadrat's physical debility and illness, he maintained the dignity and systematic organization of his assembly, and continued adhering to his principles and rules. These did not change in the least until his final moments. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* that he lived a perfect life which was based on perfect abstinence and asceticism, perfect following of the Sharīʿah, and perfect emulation of the Sunnah. He was created to come as a model for this era, portrayed a life of striving for sixty years, and then departed.

رحمه الله تعالى وأدخله أعلى عليين، وصلى الله تعالى على النبي الأميين، واله وأصحابه أجمعين.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين.

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Akhbār Madīnah of Bijnor dated 1 August 1944 contained the following article:

The demise of H̲akīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī *rah̲imahullāh* is a tragedy over which – although is inevitable in this fleeting and temporary abode – the mourning eyes will never stop crying. According to H̲akīm Thanāʾī *rah̲imahullāh*, several centuries are needed for the birth of a perfect human being. Now when such a rare pearl slips away from the hands of the world, then the separation is most difficult. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Maulānā Thānwī *rah̲imahullāh* had a long life. It is a great thing for a person to live between 80-90 years in these pain-filled and illness-prone times. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, his health remained so good that he was able to write countless books. Despite all this, our eyes cannot stop tearing from the mere thought of his separation from us.

We never agreed with the Maulānā's political views…notwithstanding all that, we always submitted before and acknowledged Maulānā Thānwī's academic acumen and the loftiness of his purity and piety. The Maulānā was a unique jurist. He was an unparalleled mufassir. He was an unmatched scholastic theologian and a distinguished muh̲addith. And with Allāh's blessing, together with the bounties of knowledge and erudition, he was a leader in the field of tas̲awwuf and the T̲arīqah. In these times of deviation and misguidance, his Khānqāh was a lighthouse for the seekers of the truth. A major peculiar trait in him was that he could not tolerate exacting revenge from even his enemies. Very rarely would he utter anything against his opponents. He lived a very principled life. He had a set time-table for eating, drinking, sleeping, waking up, moving about and sitting down – which he used to adhere to very strictly. This is the reason why he enjoyed an enviable good health until the end.

Bearing in mind all these peculiar qualities, we can claim and say that it will be very difficult for the world to produce such a comprehensive personality. In short, the Maulānā's personality enjoyed a very lofty and distinguished position. He has a very large number of disciples in the country. What is worthy of mention is that this number includes many ʿulamā', distinguished scholars and people of insight…May Allāh *taʿālā* engulf him in His mercy and inspire us to follow in his footsteps with patience. Āmīn.

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We now quote a few letters.

A scholar who is a special member of a group holding divergent views writes with pain, sincerity and without any extremism:

May Allāh inspire you with patience. I just received the news of the demise of Ashraf al-'Ulamā' *rahimahullāh*. I cannot understand with what words I must urge not only you, but myself and the Islamic community to exercise patience. What a critical loss, major injury and serious catastrophe! During this time when atheism and agnosticism are advancing, divine decree has sanctioned this additional challenge of taking away a unique personality from us? A personality with whom just a few minutes were sufficient to affect the heart and mind with Islamic realities. I take an oath in the Sustainer who must have already made the deceased's grave a part of Paradise that I now see forlornness from here to there.

There are a few people who know the Qur'ān. There are Hadīth specialists. We also have Sufis, scholars, litterateurs and orators. But where do we have a personality like him who combines all these qualities plus many more. Religiosity is crying, spirituality is mourning and the assemblies of knowledge are silent. You may not believe it, but there are many like myself who had been making this du'ā' from before: O Allāh! Shorten our lives and add to the lifespan of this servant of the Dīn of Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the upholder and protector of the Sharī'ah. (There were certainly many who made this du'ā' – compiler).

However, this du'ā' was not accepted. Oh! My pen is crying out for him and my heart is occupied in seeking forgiveness for him. Allāh has forgiven him. There can be no true deputy of the Maulānā (in the present condition). However, convey my salām and condolences to the person whom you people considered to be his most eligible khalīfah and to your Pīr Bhāis as well. (Hadrat Wālā did not believe in the custom of a deputy. In fact, he had written a book titled *Sajjādah Nashīnī* on this subject. Anyway, how can there be a deputy for such rare personalities who come into this world only after centuries? Furthermore, they are not reserved for certain places only [rather they can be sent anywhere in the world] – compiler).

Khwājah Sāhib! Remember that today there are many of those hearts crying with you who, yesterday, had differences with you on certain issues. However, this is a tragedy which has made even us aware of this loss which will probably not be

repaired for years. Khwājah S̲āh̲ib! Do not cry! Rejoice over the fact that your shaykh and mentor rendered the most glittering Dīnī services. Pride over the fact that your eyes were able to see such a perfect person for so many years. You can boast over the fact that you benefited from him for such a long time. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā*. Was salām.

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The following is a letter from a well-known writer:

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rah̲matullāh.

What can I say and in what words can I express what passed through my heart when I heard of the major tragedy! I am not only speaking about myself but my entire household – my wife, my sons and my daughters. If I were to offer condolences, than to who because I myself am eligible for condolences. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

There can be no bigger Resurrection-like tragedy for the Islamic world than this one. The world of Islam has become forlorn. The most distinguished scholar of our time, the greatest Gnostic, and the most senior and loyal general of the army of Muh̲ammad *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* has gone to meet Allāh *taʿālā*. Wretched people like us were not even deserving of this bounty! I am not astonished at the fact that this great bounty has been taken back at its appointed time; I am astonished at how it lived among us for so long.

Kindly convey my sincere condolences to both [H̲ad̲rat Wālā's] senior and junior wife. The Sultanate of both has been taken away. Although in comparison to this fleeting Sultanate, the eternal Sultanate has been established. Everyone must be convinced that it is not only their hearts which have broken, but of countless members of this ummah. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with patience until we all reach the court of our Master through the accepted servant of Allāh's beloved [Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*].

Was salām.

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Another distinguished research scholar writes:

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rah̲matullāhi wa barakātuh…H̲ad̲rat *rah̲imahullāh* has left this lowly world and gone on to the

highest companionship [with Allāh *taʿālā*]. I learnt of Hadrat's demise in yesterday's newspaper. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. Who is going to console and provide solace to whom, after all, this is a tragedy which has struck the entire ummah of Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Hadrat was a Mujaddid of the century. The entire ummah is in need of solace and consolation. The one who is most in need of solace is this worthless fellow who brings a bad name to the ummah and who used to seek Hadrat's guidance and steering at every step of the way. Even now I had so many questions and issues which I had to present to Hadrat, but was waiting for him to recover. I could not find in entire books and libraries what I used to receive from Hadrat's few statements and paragraphs. These alone were the treasures which brought satisfaction to me.

There is no dearth of information in books and authors. However, giving consideration to a seeker's specific conditions, bearing in mind what will be most advantageous to him, and wise affection – all this could only be done by a spiritual master like Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him on our behalf and on behalf of the entire ummah.

A Hadīth states: "Death puts an end to a person's actions. Only three things continue: (1) a continuous charity, (2) knowledge from which benefit is derived, (3) a righteous child who makes duʿā' for him." Hadrat *rahimahullāh* initiated continuous charity himself, Allāh willing - people will continue benefiting from his sciences until the Resurrection, and as for spiritual righteous children, there are no better people than like yourself who consider it their honour to make duʿā' for Hadrat's forgiveness and raise in ranks.

اللّٰهُمَّ اغفر له، وارفع درجته في المهديين، وعقبنا منه عقبى حسنة، وافسح له في قبره، ونور له فيه. آمين يا رب العالمين.

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Finally, I quote a letter which is filled with pain and grief, and which – so to say – expresses the condition of the hearts of all of Hadrat Wālā's attendants. One of Hadrat Wālā's grief-stricken attendant expresses his grief to a very close family member of Hadrat Wālā in the following words. Almost all the attendants share the same sentiments and feelings.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa raḫmatullāhi wa barakātuh…On hearing about the tragic news last month, I had lost my senses to such an extent that I could not write any letter to you. Even if I did, what would I have been able to write? I sat down several times to write, and was left thinking about what I should write and to whom? From where can I get those words to express the never-decreasing grief which was never experienced before nor will it be experienced in the future? I am not the only one who is caught up in this grief. Rather, the heart of every Muslim is crying. Tears are flowing and my pen is slipping from my hand. The same condition prevails even now. I am at a loss at what to write. Every person appears to be crying. It is raining; it seems the skies are also crying. O Allāh! What is happening? How is it that the entire world is in mourning? Previously I used to think to myself: When this shadow of mercy is lifted from us, what will happen to sinners like myself? This thought has now become the reality. I cannot think of anyone under whose shadow sinners like myself will take refuge. The pain of separation of a few close relatives had still not subsided when this most painful of tragedies took place which caused me to forget all other sorrows. My parents passed away, my maternal uncle departed and many other close relatives have passed on. But I never experienced such a painful tragedy before nor will I face one in the future.

The lives of my wife and children now appear to be insignificant. When the greatest personality of the time, when the most perfect model of humanity of the era disappears forever from our eyes, when the sun from whose knowledge and virtue the entire world was illuminated sets, then for how long will we be able to manage with lamps which are flickering on the verge of going off? The world appears dark now. We had a support, a place of refuge, a person to whom we could turn. When a sinner used to lose hope from everyone and turned in this direction, he would receive the same reply: "Do not despair of Allāh's mercy. Repent. If your repentance breaks, repent again and make a firm intention each time. I am making duʿā' for you, you too must make duʿā'. Allāh willing, you will be forgiven."

On hearing these affection-filled words from this true heir of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and a genuine deputy of the S̲aḫābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum*, the worst of sinners would regain courage, turn in repentance and enrich himself with the

treasure of complete īmān. Now where will we get this treasure from? The treasures of the Qur'ān, Hadīth and fiqh are filled with gold and jewels, and will remain so. Unfortunately, the one who could acquire them and distribute them to every house has departed. When an elder in a family passes away, people send letters of condolence and reduce the grief of the relatives. But when that greatest of personalities of our era departs from this temporary abode to the everlasting abode – a personality who has spiritual children in large numbers in every household, when the death of a scholar is truly the death of the world, when every Muslim considers himself to be an orphan, and every house mourns it – then to which houses can letters of condolence be sent, and who is going to send them? Thus, it is best for everyone to cry silently, and to acquire blessings by sending rewards to his pure soul through recitation of the Qur'ān and charity. We must all make duʿā' that Allāh *taʿālā* enables us to live by the guidelines and teachings of Hadrat Wālā until our death.

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By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, we quoted a few letters to serve as examples. From the above, the reader must have clearly gauged the deep impact Hadrat Wālā's demise had on every section of the Muslim community. Look at how universal the grief of this major tragedy is! Everyone is affected by it – the friend and the foe. The fact of the matter is that Hadrat Wālā's agreement with a person was for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*, and his disagreement with someone was also for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*.

I personally heard him explaining away the statements and actions of his major opponents. He would very often say: "Even if a scholar is my opponent, it pains my heart to humiliate him because this entails bringing disrepute to the Dīn." When any of his opponents were defeated in a debate, he would express sorrow because he felt it entailed his own disgrace because the masses will say that the ʿulamā' are fighting against each other.

A few senior and popular ʿulamā' said from the pulpits: "The tragic incident of Hadrat Wālā's demise is not as painful for the masses as it is for the ʿulamā' because the masses can still solve their problems from people like us, but there is no one to solve the problems which are faced by the ʿulamā'. Where will they go to? The biggest loss is for the ʿulamā'." Some of them

said: “It is not only the murīds, but even the ‘ulamā’ who have been orphaned.”

Coincidentally I just came across a letter written by a distinguished scholar together with Hadrat Wālā’s reply. I present it to the reader who can then gauge to what extent senior ‘ulamā’ used to have their problems solved through Hadrat Wālā. The scholar wrote:

> All praise is due to Allāh *ta‘ālā*, no whispering and doubt remains in whatever Hadrat recommends. It seems as though I have found an explicit text of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. There may be shortcomings in my actions, but Hadrat’s prescription is totally sufficient to bring peace and satisfaction to my mind and temperament.”

Hadrat Wālā gave the following reply in Arabic:

> هذا أحق لصحة رأيي إنشاء الله تعالى، وأنا أدعو لكم أن يزيدكم نورًا وهدًى.
>
> Allāh willing, this is enough for the correctness of my opinion. I make du‘ā’ that Allāh *ta‘ālā* increases you in effulgence and guidance.

A similar theme was written by a person in a newspaper. I can recall the gist of it:

> A peculiar point which I saw in the Maulānā’s writings is that as one is reading whatever he has written, it feels as if the mind and heart are together accepting whatever he is saying. Some time back, I had delivered the main address in the Urdu Conference and made special reference to Hadrat’s favour to the Urdu language. I had stated that Hadrat did a great favour to the Urdu language by compiling a treasure house of major sciences and facts which were not to be found before this.

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A person holding an M.M.A., L.L.B. degree from ‘Alīgarh College wrote an article in a newspaper which is published from a far-off region of India. He wrote the following towards the end of his article:

> The grief over the Maulānā is undoubtedly universal. From the mourners, we do not only see those who are dressed in jubbah's and turbans. Rather, people wearing hats and suits are also seen.

Hadrat Maulānā Asghar Husayn Deobandī is a famous elder and a reminder of the senior scholars of the past. When he came [to Thānah Bhawan] to offer his condolences, then the moment he entered the Khānqāh, he sat on the bricked-floor, lowered his head, cried for a long time and expressed his grief. All who were present in the Khānqāh came and sat around him and were watching the scene before them. I heard that the Maulānā made this statement: "The Khātam al-Auliyā' (seal of the auliyā') has passed away."

In short, Hadrat Wālā's legacy and spiritual contributions are being applauded and praised from everywhere, and the cries of grief over his departure are raised from all corners.

Everyone – friend and foe – is feeling that a personality who embraced so many perfect qualities cannot be replaced. Based on:

يضع له القبول في الأرض

Allāh instils acceptance for him on earth.

The universal acceptance which he enjoys stems from the acceptance which he enjoys in Allāh's sight.

Why should this not be the case bearing in mind the intense affection and consideration which Hadrat Wālā had with Allāh's creation! I had mentioned previously that there was a time when he used to make du'ā' even for animals. When he used to hear of earthquakes and other calamities, his heart would melt and he would be severely affected. The level of his affection for Muslims can be gauged from the fact that he had devoted his whole life in the service of Muslims. His brimming affection and mercy over their destroyed condition used to have such an effect on him that he said on one occasion: "Allāh *ta'ālā* knows this condition of mine: When I think of the Dīnī and worldly destruction of Muslims – which is by and large due to Muslims' own disregard for consequences – a severe grief spreads through every vein in my body. When I think of eating food, it becomes a bitter experience for me."

When the Turks were defeated, he said: "Allāh *taʿālā* has always maintained me in comfort, this is why I never knew what it is to be grieved. But now I have realized what grief is because the defeat of the Turks and the humiliation of Muslims has afflicted my heart to such an extent that I cannot even enjoy eating and drinking."

What can be said about that deep affection and consideration which was not only verbally but practically demonstrated. Hadrat Wālā used to give correct guidance to Muslims on every political occasion by publishing various booklets periodically. Benefiting from them or not benefiting from them was left to others.

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The Muslim League Extends An Invitation To Hadrat Wālā

Just three months before his demise when he was gone considerably ill and weak, he provided full guidelines to the Muslim League which were completely in line with the Islamic viewpoint. This is how it came about: The last annual session of the All India Muslim League was held on a large scale in Delhi from 23-26 April 1943. The leaders of the Muslim League informed Hadrat Wālā of it and invited him to attend in the following words: We request you to personally come to Delhi on this occasion and guide the assembly with your statements. This would be best. However, if you cannot come personally, send your representative for which we will be most grateful. We request you to make duʿā' that through the awe of this gathering, Allāh *taʿālā* bewitches the hearts of the non-Muslims and convinces them to agree to our demand for Pakistan so that an Islamic Sultanate can be established…

Hadrat Wālā wrote the following reply as a message to those attending the session.

Hadrat Wālā's Reply To The Muslim League

From this worthless and characterless fellow, the destitute among people, who is Ashraf just in name. To the leaders of the Muslim league. May Allāh *taʿālā* help them and may he keep them hale and hearty.

As-salāmu ʿalaykum.

After learning about the objectives of the League, I got the inspiration to practise on the following verse:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللّٰهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهٖ فَبِذٰلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوْا

Say: By the grace of Allāh and His beneficence – in this, then, they should rejoice.[1]

However, if I did not have an excuse, I would have practised on this verse as well:

اِنْفِرُوْا خِفَافًا وَّثِقَالًا

March forth lightly and heavily.[2]

Bearing in mind that I do have a valid excuse, I got the permission to act on the following concession:

لَيْسَ عَلَى الضُّعَفَاءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضٰى وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَجِدُوْنَ مَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ حَرَجٌ اِذَا نَصَحُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ.

There is no sin on the weak, the sick nor on those who do not have anything to spend provided they are sincere to Allāh and His Messenger.[3]

Together with all this, I have acquired the honour of the above verse in the sense that I am going to inform you about two of my books which – Allāh willing – contain a message of action for the forthcoming generations until the day of Resurrection. One is *Hayātul Muslimīn* which is for individual rectification. The other is *Siyānatul Muslimīn* for the democratic system. Although its themes are not colourful, they are weighty. The difference in them is the same as the difference between the poems of Dhauq and Ghālib, or the prescriptions of Hakīm Mahmūd Khān and Hakīm Muhammad Sādiq Khān. If I were to send a representative [as requested by you], he will not be able to accomplish what these books can. However, putting into practise is a pre-requisite. Like a very high quality soup which is filled in bottles. It is valuable, but of no use [because it is not being consumed]. Its benefit will only be demonstrated when it goes down the throat. Without action all these efforts will be

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[1] Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 58.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 41.
[3] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 91.

manifestations of: “They merely sat, discussed and then got up.” I am always making duʿā’ and will make special duʿā’ on those days [of the conference]. As a poet says:

لا خيل عندك تهديها ولا مال – فليستد النطق إن لم يسعد الحال

You neither have a horse nor any wealth which you could present. If we cannot benefit from your situation, your speech will suffice.

Note: If I am able to obtain both books here, I will send them by post on the 22nd of April as a gift to you. If not, you could check with one of the bookshops in Delhi.

Was salām.

After making inquiries, I have learnt that *H̱ayāt al-Muslimīn* can be posted for free, so I am sending a copy. I have also learnt that *S̱iyānatul Muslimīn* is not available here so you can look for it there.

The reader has seen how, with what importance and with what pain and consideration H̱aḏrat Wālā conveyed the message of truth. To practise or not is left to them. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire all.

In short, H̱aḏrat Wālā spent his entire life in the service of Islam, and strove for the success of Muslims in both worlds.

جزاه الله عن جميع المسلمين أحسن الجزاء

May Allāh reward him on behalf of all Muslims with the best of rewards.

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This was with regard to his political services which he rendered to the extent that he could and which was required of those who are engaged in propagation. As for religious services, he spent his entire life in that as was mentioned in detail while describing the conditions related to his death. H̱aḏrat Wālā was so enthusiastic about providing benefit and teaching, that he never experienced peace without them. The reader must have gauged this from some of the conditions which were described previously. With regard to this aspect of his life, I coincidentally came across two short dreams which were seen by senior scholars together with H̱aḏrat Wālā’s interpretations in my

copy of *Husn al-ʿAzīz* which is presently in front of me. I consider it most appropriate to quote them here. My heart spontaneously felt that they should be presented to the reader to support and strengthen what I said, and to provide some light-heartedness to the reader.

First Dream

I saw a dream in which your blessed chest was filled with milk, thus causing you discomfort. In order to reduce your discomfort, I placed my mouth on the left side and began extracting the milk. I swallowed some of it while some also fell down.

Interpretation

I have no specific affiliation with interpretation of dreams. However, you will most probably consider this excuse to be a discomfort. Therefore, if the one who had seen the dream was junior and the one whom he saw was senior, then I assume that I would give this interpretation: The one who was dreamt of has been given such beneficial branches of knowledge that he feels compelled to pass them on, and feels disturbed when they are not passed on. The one who saw the dream took some of the knowledge (immediately or independently). Some of the milk falling is reference to…

> If drinking just a sip of wine can cause a fountain.

Second Dream

I saw a dream in which I was on a journey with you. Hadrat said to me: "I have been made into a four-legged bed."

Interpretation

It probably refers to the four Sufi lineages in the sense that the services which I rendered to the Tarīqah have rectified and set right the four Sufi lineages.

Whenever there was a need, Hadrat Wālā used to bear the harshest of fatigue to render Dīnī services until the very end.

He wrote to seeker:

"Although it was very tiring for me to read the details concerning your conditions and practices, I took the precaution of reading them. I realized that you intermingled necessary and unnecessary, and controllable and uncontrollable themes.

Therefore, a firm and complete answer could not come to my mind, and I did not have the courage to reply to each part of your letter because each part was mixed up with the previous one. Out of consideration to you, I cannot stop you from writing a lengthy letter because certain temperaments are not satisfied until they go into lengthy details. However, let me explain how you should arrange a letter of this nature. If you have several themes which you need to write, then number each part. After doing this, clearly state at the end what you want me to do. The benefit of doing it like this is that I will be able to write the answer over several sessions, and when I am writing an answer to one point, I will not have to worry about the previous point – as is the case at the moment where all points are mixed up. If you can bear this in mind, you have the choice to write a lengthy letter or a short one."

Glory to Allāh! Look at the level of his consideration! Look at the procedures which he laid down! Look at the ease which he provided! All this he did so that even during his condition of illness and weakness, he could continue providing Dīnī benefit to people. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards. Āmīn.

H͟ad͟rat Wālā always considered himself to be a servant for all Muslims equally. He did not differentiate between murīds and non-murīds in his Dīnī services to them, and demonstrated this practically as well. In short, if a person spent his entire life in this way in serving Allāh's creation and – so to speak – sacrificed his life for it – then it is not surprising at all for the entire world, whether friend or foe, to mourn over his departure from this world.

I recall a statement of H͟ad͟rat Wālā on this subject: "Nowadays people do not appreciate and value. In fact, some of them oppose me. However, later on, everyone will hold their heads and cry. Only then will they appreciate."

This is exactly what happened.

May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire all to formally study H͟ad͟rat Wālā's writings and to put them into practice because they will – Allāh willing – find Dīn in its original and complete form in his writings. May Allāh give benefactors to pay attention in this regard so that libraries containing H͟ad͟rat Wālā's writings are opened everywhere so that people can have access to them. The

person who undertakes a formal study of Hadrat Wālā's writings will – Allāh willing – clearly see the rare and priceless jewels and pearls of sciences which they are filled with. In fact, I consider it essential for every Muslim to read them. Those who are educated must read the simple books or simplify the difficult books and read them to those who cannot read and write. In this way, they themselves will benefit and they will benefit others as well.

Further, the 'ulamā' can render services to Hadrat Wālā's writings in the following ways:

1. Selecting and collating themes on Sufism.
2. Compiling points on the Qur'ān and Hadīth.
3. Summarizing or simplifying the *Mawā'iz*.
4. Compiling the answers to objections made by modernists and presenting them in a new format.
5. Explaining complex themes and subject matters.
6. Arranging fatāwā according to juridical chapters, and so on.

In short, whatever form of general propagation and total benefit that comes to the mind must be adopted. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

A Few Specific Bequests

Hadrat Wālā did not leave any of his affairs in such a state whereby there could be a Shar'ī objection later on. Quite some time ago he noted detailed bequests about his entire estate and had it published. Janāb Maulānā Shabbīr 'Alī Sāhib is presently distributing the estate very diligently and with absolute caution. Hadrat Wālā left behind just four heirs, two brothers[1] and two wives. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, both brothers have been blessed with a lot of wealth. They only took one or two items as a source of blessings which were used by Hadrat Wālā, and gave the remainder to Hadrat Wālā's two wives. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them with the best of rewards in both worlds for this gift.

Some of the bequests which are for general benefit and applicable to all are quoted briefly below. If anyone wants to

[1] These were step brothers from the mother's side.

see them in detail, they can be found in volume three of *Ashraf as-Sawāniḫ*.

1. I plead to all my friends to seek forgiveness for my minor, major, intentional and unintentional sins.

2. Due to some of my bad characteristics, some servants of Allāh *taʿālā* experienced verbal and physical afflictions in my presence and my absence. Some rights have also been trampled.[1] Whether the rightful people know about them or not, I humbly appeal to everyone – juniors and seniors – to pardon me with all their heart solely for Allāh's sake. Allāh *taʿālā* will overlook their shortcomings. I too pray for them that Allāh *taʿālā* bestows them with pardon and wellbeing in both worlds. There are many virtues for pardoning the shortcomings of a person who apologizes…

3. As for the shortcomings of this nature [mentioned above] which have been committed by others against me, I gladly pardon them for their past and future shortcomings solely for Allāh's pleasure and with the hope of having my own shortcomings pardoned.

4. I stress on my friends specifically and to all Muslims in general that it is compulsory on each person to acquire knowledge of Dīn and to teach it to his children. This can be done through books or companionship. There is no other way of safeguarding one's self from Dīnī tribulations which are the order of the day. They must certainly not display any shortcomings in this regard.

5. I advise students not to be deluded and proud by mere studying and teaching. Success in teaching and imparting knowledge is dependent on the service, companionship and affectionate gaze of the Ahlullāh. They must adhere to this very strictly. A poet says:

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[1] Similarly, if anyone has a monetary claim over me, he must inform me and I will pay him or he may pardon me. This is especially so when there were those incidental occasions when the stamps of those who wrote letters to me – stamps costing one or two rupees – were found mistakenly with the refuse. Because I could not establish the owners, they were spent as lost items. However, the rightful owners have the right to approve the way they were spent or inform me and I will pay them back.

> Even if a person becomes an angel without the affection and attention of the special servants of Allāh *taʿālā*, his book of deeds will be black.

6. The Madrasah which is presently under my administration here [in Thānah Bhawan] holds a certain status which needs to be explained… My heart desires that attention be paid to its continued existence after me. Whoever Allāh *taʿālā* inspires to serve this Madrasah must not alter its system which includes an extremely important part of character training and rectification of the self. Allāh willing, there is hope for a lot of goodness and blessings in this.

7. Bearing in mind the Dīnī and worldly harms, I advise special precautions with regard to the following:

21. Do not act on the demands of desires and anger.
22. Hastiness is extremely detrimental.
23. Do not do anything without consultation.
24. Give up backbiting completely.
25. Excessive talking even if on lawful matters is extremely harmful. Excessive intermingling with people without any extreme need and without any desired advantage – especially when it leads to the level of friendship, and to make matters worse, when every Tom, Dick and Harry is made into a confidant – is also extremely harmful.
26. Never eat food without having a real desire to eat.
27. Do not engage in conjugal relations without a real urge.
28. Do not incur a debt without a severe need.
29. Do not even approach wasteful spending.
30. Do not accumulate unnecessary items and goods.
31. Do not accustom yourself to sternness and severity. Let softness, self-control and forbearance be your salient qualities.
32. Abstain totally from ostentation and having airs in all matters – even in your words, actions, food and clothing.
33. A person in a position of authority must neither be rude to leaders nor intermingle too much with them. As far as possible he must not make such a leader an objective especially to acquire worldly benefits from him.
34. Consider clarity and transparency in dealings to be more important than integrity.
35. Be particularly cautious with narrations and stories. Very senior religious and intelligent people are reckless

in this regard – whether in understanding them or relating them.

36. Never consume any medication without an absolute need. And when there is a need, never consume it without permission from an expert and affectionate doctor.
37. Be very particular about restraining your tongue from every type of sin and futile talk.
38. Search for the truth, do not be dogmatic about your own view.
39. Do not increase contacts and relations.
40. Do not interfere in a person's worldly matters.

8. I request all my associates to remember me for the rest of their lives and to read Sūrah Yā Sīn or three times Sūrah Ikhlās daily, and send the rewards to me. However, they must not do anything else which is against the Sunnah or any bid'ah which is committed by the masses and elite.

9. As far as possible, do not attach your heart to the world and whatever is in it. Never be negligent of the Hereafter. Always remain in a condition whereby if death comes to you at any time, you do not have any concern or desire.

لَوْ لَا اَخَّرْتَنِيْ اِلٰى اَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ فَاَصَّدَّقَ وَاَكُنْ مِّنَ الصَّالِحِيْنَ

If only You would give me respite for a short while so that I may give in charity and become of the righteous.[1]

Constantly seek forgiveness for sins of the day before the approach of the night, and sins of the night before the approach of the day. As far as possible, try to free yourself from all rights which you owe to fellow humans.

10. Believe that a good death is the most superior and most perfect of all bounties and favours. Make special du'ā' for this with absolute supplication and beseeching after the five salāhs. Be forever thankful for īmān as per the promise:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَاَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ

If you are thankful, I will give you more.

This is also from among the great causes of a good death…

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[1] Sūrah al-Munāfiqūn, 63: 10.

11. No one must ever assemble to convey rewards to me – neither formally nor informally. If people happen to assemble for some other reason, and then decide to recite Qur'ān for the sake of conveying rewards to me, they must make it a point to disband and each person may individually convey rewards through du'ā', charity or optional worship – depending on what his heart desires. Items which were used by myself during my lifetime must not be used as items for obtaining blessings. However, if a person has become a Shar'ī owner of any of my belongings, and stores it with him secretly, there is no objection to it. He must neither announce what he has nor show it to others.

This totals eleven bequests which, based on their number, could be referred to as eleven stars which will – Allāh willing – be enough for one's guidance and practice. May Allāh *ta'ālā* give the ability. Āmīn.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* fulfil the wish which Hadrat Wālā expressed for the continuation of his Madrasah. There is strong hope for its continuation by the will of Allāh *ta'ālā*. through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, the Respected Principal Sāhib – who is responsible for the carrying out of the bequest – is carrying out the bequests especially the one related to the Madrasah. He is quite enthusiastic, has the know-how, and is moving ahead exactly in line with Hadrat Wālā's temperament. May Allāh *ta'ālā* always help him. May the Madrasah continue providing various beneficial and important religious services, and may they continue in a beautiful manner - especially the services of compiling and authoring of books, issuing of fatāwā and inviting to the truth. May Allāh *ta'ālā* provide and continue providing unseen means for the realization of all this. Āmīn.

Condolence

Most people have said this and they are absolutely correct: Who is going to console who? After all, it is a tragedy which struck the entire ummah of Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The entire ummah needs to be consoled. On such an occasion, the most consoling point is that when our master, the beloved of Allāh *ta'ālā*, the Chief of all Prophets Hadrat Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, did not remain in this world, who else is there who can remain?

What gives us solace is that the task for which Allāh *taʿālā* sent Hadrat Wālā in this world – i.e. the revival and exposition of Dīn – was carried out fully through the help of Allāh *taʿālā*. He left the path completely clear and level for us and then departed from our midst. I feel that if we really want to fulfil Hadrat Wālā's rights, we must practise even more on his teachings and guidelines so that he continues receiving rewards in the form of continuous charity. There can be no better way of conveying rewards to him. Moreover – Allāh willing – through the blessings of this, each person, according to his capacity, will be able to become eligible for his eternal companionship in Paradise. As the saying goes, we can kill two birds with one stone.

Just today one of Hadrat Wālā's attendants related his dream to me. Hadrat Wālā entered with Hadrat Hājī [Imdādullāh] Sāhib Muhājir Makkī, Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī and Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *quddisallāhu asrārahum*. When he [the attendant] asked who these people were, Hadrat Wālā introduced each one to him and said: "You too will remain with me over here. You will remain in my service."

May Allāh *taʿālā* bless him [the attendant] and all of us with this treasure. The most effective way of acquiring it is as mentioned above. That is, the inspiration to obey and follow Allāh *taʿālā*. Āmīn.

As for patience, it is something which Allāh *taʿālā* gives gradually. Like a person who had written to Hadrat Wālā when his son had passed away: "I have full conviction in Allāh's order and the fact that He is all-wise. However, my heart is no longer settled. Kindly provide me with a treatment which would bring tranquillity to my heart." Hadrat Wālā wrote back: "There is no procedure for acquiring natural tranquillity. It will come gradually on its own. As for rational tranquillity, it can be acquired by meditating over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* is the absolute judge and He is the most wise."

This was actually a short letter of condolence written by Hadrat Wālā. Now observe a detailed letter of condolence.

On the occurrence of this tragic incident, I said to my friends that even on this occasion, we needed Hadrat Wālā for our consolation. The manner in which Hadrat Wālā's words of

consolation can bring solace to us cannot be achieved from anyone else. But he is no more. Now look at this coincidence. A person sent me a detailed letter of consolation which was written by Hadrat Wālā himself eleven years ago. The person is a mujāz-e-suhbat of Hadrat Wālā and also a relative.

At the time, he was studying in London while his father passed away here [in India]. It seemed as though it came from the unseen when this person sent this letter of condolence to me for the consolation of grief-stricken people like myself. It was read in many homes, many copies of it were made and sent out. On seeing the wide acceptance of this letter, the person [to whom it was originally written] decided to have it printed exactly as it was written. He eventually did this. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him.

It is hoped that the subject matter will be most admonitory and solacing. It will also demonstrate the unattached and disinterested manner in which Hadrat Wālā lived in this world. The fact that Hadrat Wālā is a Hakīm al-Ummat will also be demonstrated because it shows the subtle manner in which he conveyed his message, and how he took full consideration of the time and occasion in conveying his condolence. Had this not been the case, the person who was so far away in a foreign land would have been so affected by this tragedy that he might have even returned home without completing his studies. Or he might have undertook this long journey to come and go back, and spent a large amount of money for it. The letter is as follows:

My dear brother. As-salāmu 'alaykum…Quite some time back I was coming to the Madrasah when I met the small son of Hāfiz I'jāz on the way. I engaged in some light conversation with him which probably agitated him, so he said: "May Allāh cause Big Abbā [referring to me] to die." I pondered over the effect which his statement had on me and – all praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* – I felt like a traveller who left the comfort of his house and is journeying somewhere for some work. The journey is such that he has to face difficulties and discomfort at every step of the way. Someone tells him: "May Allāh convey you to your house." No matter what intention the person said it with, what effect will it have on the one who heard it? He will obviously be very happy and think to himself that this person made a very good du'ā' for me. If he made the du'ā' with the intention of a curse,

then together with the happiness which the traveller will feel, he will be surprised and think to himself: "This person is quite silly. He is considering the duʿā' to be a curse." All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this is the same feeling which went through me [when the child said that Allāh must cause me to die]. I laughed and thought to myself that this child thinks that he made a terrible duʿā' against me but in reality it is in my favour.

Now what was the cause of this effect which it had on me? It was solely through intellect and Dīn which I acquired from the companionship of the pious elders. Had this not been the case, the natural effect of this duʿā' would have been disapproval. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred the wealth of intellect and Dīn so that they both can take precedence over one's natural response in situations of this type. It is through the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* that He blessed you with Dīn, intelligence and also the companionship of the Ahlullāh which has considerably strengthened and added to these two powers [intellect and Dīn]. Thus, if you are faced with such a situation, you will certainly keep your intellect and Dīn to overwhelm your natural temperament. Now let me tell you of occasions of this nature.

Your father was ill since a long time and you have been receiving information about his ill health. He has now left this world of hardships and temporary abode and proceeded to his original resting place of the Hereafter. You will certainly be affected by this news, and it is neither rationally nor Islamically reprehensible to be affected. In fact, it is a sign of love and mutual mercy which every Muslim has a right over another Muslim. This applies even more when a person has a stronger kinship with the other, and even more when it is one's mentor and tutor. However, together with this, we are required to overwhelm our natural disposition through our intellect and Dīn, and be pleased with the decree of Allāh *taʿālā*. We must neither become agitated and distressed nor transgress the limits. We must take control of our heart and help the deceased by conveying rewards to him either by physical acts of worship such as optional prayers and recitation of the Qur'ān or by monetary charities – whatever is easy.

The incident may not have too much of effect on the heart, but concern for his salvation may perplex you. What I can say in this regard is that although the deceased was free as regards

his actions, his beliefs, emotions, capabilities, his desire to benefit all especially people of Dīn, respect for all, kindness towards them and concern for their wellbeing are all qualities which attract the mercy of Allāh *taʿālā*. Furthermore, the hardships which he had to endure during his illness will – as per the H̲adīth – become atonements for his sins. If we had to cast aside all this, conveying rewards to him can bring him the same benefit as actions themselves. It is now left to those who have survived him [if they want to convey rewards to him or not].

In short, exercise patience. The perfection of this patience includes that you must not be so affected by this incident to the extent that it causes you to change your programme of action. You cannot bring benefit to him or anyone else by causing harm to yourself, so what benefit is there in such a futile exercise? You must complete whatever you have to do over there and then come here, as was planned since before. I conclude with a duʿā'.

From Thānah Bhawan, 6 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1351 A.H.

Final Request

Although this account is disjointed, it is as the saying goes:

> When you have a pain, then no matter which side you lie down, it is still a pain.

Relating the incidents and conditions related to H̲ad̲rat Wālā's demise are certainly not enough for remorse, however – Allāh willing – they are satisfactory. As for the disjointed nature of this account, people who have an interest will – Allāh willing – find it as a poet says:

> He has come all tattered and hair dishevelled. Look at this person with nothing in his possession. What wealth will he come up with.

And he will say:

> Even the dishevelling of his beauty has brought joy.

As for those who have an even higher level of interest, there is sufficient material for them in this. They can arrange it as they wish and present it like a formal book so that a useful work is prepared for the elite. I had said the same thing in *Ashraf as-Sawānih̲*. I am a Majdhūb, I am not an author. I certainly have

feelings and emotions, but I do not know how to present them in an orderly manner. However, whatever I said is what I heard from Hadrat Wālā. The reader too must have seen from this disjointed account which has been presented with grief the high level of Hadrat Wālā's life and death. It is as though Allāh *taʿālā* demonstrated to us that if you want to see a life, this is how it must be, and if you want to see a death, then this is how it must be. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless everyone with a life and death like this. Hadrat Wālā was certainly a unique and all-embracing personality who had threaded thousands of people of different conditions and various ideas in one single thread. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا

Hold on to the rope of Allāh altogether and do not disperse.[1]

People from every level of society – small to big – were infatuated by Hadrat Wālā. They all used to come to him and be immensely impressed. Many senior leaders – despite their political differences – also came and left highly impressed. Many wealthy and affluent people, Nawābs, Englishmen holding high positions would present themselves humbly before Hadrat Wālā and leave extremely satisfied and happy.

Hadrat Wālā himself used to say: "When I have a few words with a person, he becomes so impressed as if his heart is now in my hand." He also said: "When a seeker comes to me, then by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, his illness and its treatment comes to my mind just by speaking a few words with him." The cheerful and the serious would each consider Hadrat Wālā to be like himself although Hadrat Wālā's temperament was matchless. He used to treat each person according to his temperament and disposition. He himself used to say: "I do not wield the same stick at everyone."

Even when the condition was the same, Hadrat Wālā's different treatments were because he also looked at peculiarities in temperaments. Generally, it was prohibited to write poetry when writing to one's shaykh because it was considered disrespectful. However, some of those who had an inclination for poetry used to quote it in their letters and Hadrat Wālā

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 103.

tolerated it out of consideration to their inclinations. Janāb Qādī Muhammad Mukarram Sāhib is from his extended family and also a poet. He had been making requests for bayʿah since a long time. However, Hadrat Wālā used to be –by and large – hesitant in accepting the bayʿah of relatives because if he were to apply all his rules to them, it would be against the demands of kinship, and if he did not, it would amount to betrayal. This is why he deferred his requests for bayʿah. Qādī Sāhib left his workplace on one occasion solely for this purpose and wrote a poem on the way.

Now when he came, then instead of making a verbal request for bayʿah, he presented the poem which he had written. Hadrat Wālā's sharp gaze immediately perceived his request in it although he does not make any explicit mention of bayʿah in it. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "You are really persisting. Very well, you must come to my house after ʿasr and I will accept your bayʿah there." He called him to his house so that other relatives do not come to know of it because he used to refuse bayʿah from relatives.

As the saying goes:

طرق الوصول إلى الله بعدد أنفاس الخلائق

The ways of reaching Allāh taʿālā are as many as the breaths taken by the creations.

Hadrat Wālā's treatment of each seeker was different. However, his treatment was so heart-satisfying that although he used to issue warnings, scold and reprimand in most cases, every person remained faithful to him until the very end, and even cries out for him to this day.

Someone tried to find fault with Hadrat Wālā's methodology and read the following verse in support of the need for him to adopt a softer approach:

وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيْظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوْا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

Had you been harsh, hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you.[1]

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 159.

Hadrat Wālā immediately replied: "This verse is actually in support of me. By the grace of Allāh *ta'ālā*, no one is dispersing from here. Despite my methodology [and strictness], people are remaining attached to me. In the light of this verse, it is gauged that I am not hard-hearted. If not, people would have certainly dispersed. The fact that they do not disperse also proves that I am not hard-hearted."

It is a fact that when Hadrat Wālā expresses his displeasure at a person or expels him, he constantly thinks of him, speaks about him and expresses his remorse. Hadrat Wālā's treatment of the person in this manner is solely to issue a warning. His heart is always focussed on him. In fact, later on, his kindness towards the person is even more than before. At the exact time of reprimanding him and after that also, Hadrat Wālā continues looking at him and focussing on his heart as though even in this condition [of reprimanding] he is conveying blessings to him. This is perceived very clearly by those who possess the perception for it.

Every person was heard saying this or each one felt that "Hadrat Wālā probably shows the most kindness towards me." Why should this not be the case when Hadrat Wālā himself used to say: "I love all my associates, but I do not allow it to be displayed for their own good." It was through the effect of this love that Hadrat Wālā was seen happy over a specific joy which was experienced by some of his most ordinary attendants. Hadrat Wālā would express his happiness as though it was of his special beloved or of a very close relative. Some attendants and some very close relatives had differences with him – based on some misunderstanding - which lasted for several years. Despite this, Hadrat Wālā never allowed any ill-feeling towards them to enter his heart. He would always receive them with a smile and concern until the misunderstandings were removed.

Hadrat Wālā was an example of a perfect human being even in character. He used to show utmost respect and honour to the 'ulamā' and seniors. During his last days, he accepted a gift from a scholar and placed it against his eyes and hosted him as his own guest. Hadrat Wālā said to him: "You can come here whenever and at whatever time you like. There are no restrictions on you." Hadrat Wālā also said to him with regard to the meals: "Forgive me if the food is not to your liking. I am

not requesting your pardon but am eligible for it." Look at his concern and hospitality despite his debility and old age!

Bearing in mind that Hadrat Wālā tutored each seeker according to his temperament, the seeker used to benefit tremendously and very quickly. Hadrat Wālā said to me on one occasion: "The benefit which is acquired elsewhere after several years is acquired here within a few weeks by virtue of the acceptance of the spiritual lineage of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib."

Hadrat Wālā always attributed his every bounty to the blessings of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib; he never attributed it to himself. So much so that he continued saying the same thing even one day before his demise. He also said this on numerous occasions: "I lose my senses at the slightest thought of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib. I experience this but others are not aware of it." I say: The enthusiasm and yearning with which he speaks about Hadrat Hājī Sāhib for long periods of time results in others perceiving this condition of Hadrat Wālā to a certain extent.

In short, Hadrat Wālā had that level of love for his shaykh which is referred to as fanā' fī ash-shaykh. Hadrat Wālā used to refer to this quality as the key to success. This is how he acquired all these treasures. May Allāh *taʿālā* also bless us with this quality through the blessing of Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

Hadrat Wālā used to say: "Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* said: 'The person who has emulation of the Sunnah and love for his shaykh has acquired everything. Even if a person sees darkness in the presence of these two, it is still considered to be light. If there is any deficiency in any of these two, then even if a person sees light, it is considered to be darkness.'" May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with these two qualities to the level of perfection through the blessings of the teachings and guidelines of Hadrat Wālā. Āmīn.

Sound Advice

The attendants of Hadrat Wālā are by and large seen to be quite confused and worried. They do not know what to do or where to go. Their confusion and worry is totally understandable because their eyes saw such a perfect Sufi master who is only born after centuries. Where will they get such a personality now? In view of this situation, who is there who can equal him?

Since the sun has set just recently, the flickering lamps appear as though they are not even burning. However – Allāh willing – after some time they will glitter just as Hadrat Wālā himself used to speak about regularly. He used to say: "At present, in the presence of seniors, the juniors appear very junior. However, these are the ones who will glitter later on and will be seen as seniors. Allāh *taʿālā* will take Dīnī services from them. This has always been the norm of Allāh *taʿālā*. There is no need to be worried."

On one occasion Hadrat Wālā was speaking about a senior khalīfah of his. He went into a fervour and went to the extent of saying: "When I have left such people by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, there should be no grief over my demise."

In short, in the present situation, we have to fulfil our objectives from these flickering lamps. If the seekers have total capability and potential, they will be able to acquire total benefit and blessings. Lamps can be lit from small flickering flames as well. Since a long time ago Hadrat Wālā paid particular attention to ensuring that if he leaves this world suddenly, the work of Dīn must not stop; it must continue.

Consequently, he used to refer seekers to his khulafā' and respond to fatwās by referring the questioners to Deoband and Sahāranpūr. The reason he gave for doing this is that the work of Dīn must not be restricted and confined to one person so that it does not stop when he is no longer there. Rather, it must continue as previously. Consequently, the flow of seekers had subsided considerably as compared to before.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā did not leave any aspect of Dīn unfinished for us. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat Wālā's written works are there to provide complete guidelines for every matter of Dīn. Consequently, he even informed us of this subtle plot of the self which prompts some seekers to think that they cannot revert to Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' because they [some seekers] feel that these khulafā' are too junior. Whereas, even if we had to assume that the junior is not on the desired level of perfection, if the spiritual lineage is correct, benefit and blessings will certainly be derived from him at some time or the other, and the seeker's objective will be fulfilled. If he himself is not fully qualified, the one above him will be. If the one above him is not, then the one above the second one will be. And so on. This is not even the

case here. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, one after the other [in the spiritual lineage] is not only fully qualified, but is at the head of all the erudite Sufi masters. Here the seeker will – Allāh willing - be able to fulfil his object from the one closest [there is no need to look at the higher levels in the lineage].

Whatever it is, there is no reason to be despondent. The seekers may revert to whomever they have an affinity with. Allāh willing, they will not be deprived. Even if there is no affinity, Hadrat Wālā provided a procedure to be followed. He said that the person must write about his own conditions to a few khulafā', and the one in whose reply he finds the most consolation, he must place his trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and revert to that person.

I [the compiler] say: If a seeker is not satisfied by writing once, he must continue writing to a few khulafā' on several occasions about several conditions. Allāh willing, after some time he will gauge with whom he has affinity and he will settle on the right person. He must then continue his rectification under that one person. No matter what, he must impose on himself to continue reading Hadrat Wālā's books as he does with a wazīfah. This is because Hadrat Wālā used to say: "Even if it is just two pages, they must be read daily like a wazīfah." There is benefit in this and there is constant renewal. This is more so after Hadrat Wālā's demise because his blessings, teachings and guidelines can only be obtained from his writings.

Hadrat Wālā used to constantly emphasize abstention from sins, excessive speech and excessive intermingling with people. So much so that he included these in his bequests. He used to say with reference to some of his books, e.g. *Ashraf as-Sawānih*: "Appoint someone as your mentor and continue studying these books. Allāh willing, they will most certainly be enough for you to reach Allāh *taʿālā*." This is what we have to do now. We must make it a point of studying Hadrat Wālā's books and practising on them. Everything is to be found in them. Hadrat Wālā left no stone unturned. He made the path of Dīn absolutely clear and easy. I made reference to this in a couplet:

> You made the path so easy that we can say that you turned the path into the destination.

A righteous person saw Hadrat Wālā in a dream in which he said: “I have given everything to everyone, especially to such and such khalīfah.”

However, courage is most certainly a prerequisite for action. Hadrat Wālā has a statement in this regard. He emphatically said: “The essence of the entire path is in two things, sincerity and courage. And from these two, courage is the fundamental ingredient because it is also needed for sincerity.” Thus, courage becomes the essence of the path. If Allāh *taʿālā* inspires a person to this, the path will be absolutely clear and straight. Just lift your foot and move forward.

As per the teaching of Hadrat Wālā, a person should not bother about matters which are not within his control. He must not be deficient as regards matters which are within his control. If there is a shortcoming in this regard, he must make up for it with immediate repentance and then occupy himself with the task ahead. He must continue in this way for the rest of his life.

As per the instruction of Hadrat Wālā, consider rectification of your faults to be more important than different forms of dhikr. He explained the manner of doing this as follows: “Look at the faults and defects [of a person] which are listed in *Tablīgh-e-Dīn* and the seventh part of *Bahishtī Zewar*. Or, the defects which you see within yourself from experience – all these must be noted on a piece of paper. Continue adding to this list whenever you recall any new defect. When you write to your mentor, then write about one defect with a few examples. Thereafter act on the treatment which he prescribes for you. Once you are firm in the treatment of one defect, i.e. you do not experience too much of difficulty in recalling the treatment and practising on it, then get the next defect treated. Continue in this way until all defects are rectified.”

This short and concise explanation is enough for the seekers. If details are sought, then even an entire volume will not be enough. Anyway, it will not be of general benefit to provide details because each quest has a different condition, and conditions also differ with changes in time. The decision in this regard can only be made by the mentor. I now take my leave from the seekers with the following words:

> Success is realized after striving, not from mere talking.
>
> Success is achieved with concern and showing due importance. It comes with adherence to dhikr.

Continue making duʿā’ under every condition because nothing can be achieved without inspiration from Allāh *taʿālā*. Be especially particular about making the following duʿā’:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوْبَنَا بَعْدَ اِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا، وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَتَكَ، اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ. رَبَّنَا اَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُوْرَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ. اَللّٰهُمَّ مُصَرِّفَ الْقُلُوْبِ، صَرِّفْ قُلُوْبَنَا عَلٰى طَاعَتِكَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ اَقْفَالَ قُلُوْبِنَا بِذِكْرِكَ وَاَتْمِمْ عَلَيْنَا نِعْمَتَكَ، وَاَسْبِغْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلِكَ، وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِيْنَ.

O Allāh! Do not deviate our hearts after having guided us. Confer us with mercy from You, surely You alone are the giver. O Allāh! Perfect for us our light and forgive us, surely You have power over everything. O Allāh! The turner of hearts. Turn our hearts to Your obedience. O Allāh! Open the locks of our hearts with Your remembrance, perfect Your favours on us, pour Your grace on us, and include us among Your righteous servants.

A duʿā’ for softness is not enough. Rather the effect of the duʿā’ must manifest itself. A Hadīth states:

إذا أراد الله شيئا، فهيأ له أسبابه

When Allāh wills for something, He provides the means for it.

This will only be realized when a person has courage and has the inspiration to utilize his power of choice. No matter what, it is obligatory on a servant to pluck the courage and continue fulfilling the rights of servitude. At the same time, he must continue acknowledging his incapability. This advice is for seekers in general.

I now address the mujāzīn-e-bayʿat and mujāzīn-e-suhbat and say to them with utmost respect that, to a certain extent, their responsibility has increased. All gazes are now focused on them. All of them have to pay particular attention to the training of seekers in their respective places. If they do this, their collective attention can, to a certain extent, make up for the centre of rectitude and guidance who has passed on. At the same time, they have to adhere strictly to those limits and

restrictions, and give full consideration to them and preserve them – as was the distinguishing mark of Hadrat Wālā's programme of training. For example, the seeker must not be turned into one who is sought. Yes, the one who reverts on his own must be served with one's heart and soul, and with full attention and affection.

I now address the reader in general and take leave. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, in some way or the other, this totally ignorant person, a non-author, a scribe who compiled this disjointed work has, by the help of Allāh *taʿālā* and the blessings of Hadrat Wālā, completed this conclusion to the biography after mid-day of Thursday, 22 Ramadān al-Mubārak 1362 A.H. while in a state of iʿtikāf in the Masjid of Khānqāh Ashrafīyyah. It was at this time that the sun of guidance had been buried. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this last insignificant service of mine and may He make it beneficial. May He pardon me – through His grace and kindness – for whatever external and internal errors which my unworthy self committed in the course of its writing. May He protect me from the consequences of these mistakes in both worlds.

آمين يا رب العالمين، بحرمة سيد المرسلين وخاتم النبيين صلى الله عليه وسلم، وعلى آله واصحابه اجمعين، وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين.

ASHRAF AL-MALFŪZĀT FĪ MARAD AL-WAFĀT

Compiled by Muftī Muhammad Shafī' Deobandī

Prelude

This most worthless of the creation and the most insignificant of the attendants in the Ashrafī court, Muhammad Shafī' Deobandī, states that Hadrat Wālā's entire life and almost all the time of his life were devoted to teaching and instruction. When looking at Hadrat Wālā's "business" on the whole, the following verse comes spontaneously to my tongue:

اِنَّا اَخْلَصْنَاهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ

We appointed them to a specific task, and that is remembrance of the Hereafter.[1]

It seemed as if Hadrat Wālā is from among those appointed servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* whom He selected for Himself.

However, the nature of his teaching and instruction towards the latter part of his life was perceived in a more distinguished manner. One or two years before his demise he said in an assembly: "Those who are taking services from me at present are eating a ripe fruit. Previously, it was as though they were eating an unripe or half-ripe fruit." Someone who was present in the assembly remarked: "Those who ate the fruit in all three of its stages have really benefited."

When I presented myself on 16 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1361 A.H., Maulānā 'Abd al-Bārī Nadwī, Maulānā Mas'ūd 'Alī Sāhib Nadwī and many other personalities were residing in the Khānqāh. Because the length of stay of these personalities was short, Hadrat Wālā – despite his chronic illness and severe weakness – used to devote four lengthy assemblies during the night and day for them. I used to attend as well. It felt as if Hadrat Wālā wanted to dissolve everything and give everyone to drink. He dictated valuable principles which are difficult to obtain over several lifetimes.

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[1] Sūrah Sād, 38: 46.

The time for the journey to the Hereafter was drawing near. Hadrat Wālā was concerned about completing the different books which needed to be rounded up. The lengthy works which he had commenced himself were – by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* – completed. Some of the works needed lengthy conclusions and Hadrat Wālā could not bear the burden of completing them. At the same time, as per Hadrat Wālā's temperament, leaving a task unfinished was no less than the difficulty of completing it. However, Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed Hadrat Wālā with a special ability to find an easy solution for the most difficult tasks.

He adopted a unique course of action for these tasks. In this way, the need for completion was fulfilled and he was able to finish off the lengthy tasks. I recall three works in this regard. One is the book *Kathrah al-Azwāj li Sāhib al-Miʿrāj* in which Hadrat Wālā intended to collate all the Ahādīth which have been related by the pure wives of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This was a very difficult task which required a lot of research and toiling. He collated the largest section himself, i.e. the narrations of Umm al-Mu'minīn Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*, confined himself to it and had it published. He said to me with reference to the remaining sections: "I do not have the strength to work now. I have drawn attention to the need for this book and also demonstrated a specific style for it. A servant of Allāh *taʿālā* will complete it in the future." Consequently, this book has been published many times and is proving to be most beneficial to the masses and the scholars.

When Hadrat Wālā said: "A servant of Allāh *taʿālā* will complete it in the future", the thought crossed my mind that I will do it and I also thought of informing Hadrat Wālā of my intention. But then I remembered that he had already given me some other work which I had not completed as yet. This is why I could not pluck up the courage to tell him. The strange thing about it is that it never crossed my mind again. I only thought of it today when I sat down to write the prelude to the *Malfūzāt*. Even more surprising is that I am in the same situation as I was at that time, i.e. I am still occupied in the work (of writing *Ahkām al-Qur'ān*) which Hadrat Wālā had delegated to me. Allāh *taʿālā* probably reserved this task for some accepted servant who will fulfil it better than me. I still have the intention of trying to complete it if I get the time. If not,

فكم حسرات في بطون المقابر

Many regrets are lying in the bellies of the graves.

The second work which Hadrat Wālā had personally commenced with was the collation of authentic facts about Ibn Mansūr and to write the final word about him. The third work which he had started writing himself was a reply to a book attributed to Hāfiz Ibn Qayyim in which a claim was made that the Hell-fire is not eternal. This is a claim which is against the belief of the entire Muslim ummah.

The following was decided for the second two books: Hadrat Wālā personally wrote references to concise aspects of Ibn Mansūr's life, provided explanations to intricate and difficult articles, and provided the final word on Ibn Mansūr. This last aspect was the most important and had to be done by Hadrat Wālā alone. He also gave the following title for this book: *al-Qaul al-Mansūr fī Ibn al-Mansūr*.

Similarly, as regards the second book, he gave answers to the noteworthy proofs of Hāfiz Ibn Qayyim and provided solutions to difficult sections. He then had the manuscripts of both books kept safely in the library of Imdād al-'Ulūm Thānah Bhawan. He published a bequest which was directed to 'ulamā' in general and to Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib and myself in particular. He asked us to complete these two books. However, Allāh's interaction with Hadrat Wālā had always been:

> What you wish for, Allāh *ta'ālā* wishes for the same.
> Allāh *ta'ālā* fulfils the wishes of the righteous.

Subsequently, the first book was completed in detail by Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib. It was checked by everyone and after it was approved, it was published when Hadrat Wālā was still alive. The second book was completed by Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī who is a teacher at Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband. Hadrat Wālā perused through it, approved of it, and added his foreword to it. I also had the occasion of going through it. However, this book was most probably not published. In short, Hadrat Wālā had personally initiated these works, but did not have the strength to complete them himself. However, they were completed before his eyes as described above.

The writing of *Bawādir an-Nawādir* had been completed but arrangements for its printing had not been made. Hadrat Wālā's blessed heart was focused in this direction. Janāb Shaykh ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib, a Session Judge in Karachi, sent 1 000 rupees for its printing. This amount was sufficient to print 1 000 volumes at that time but there was some delay in transcribing it. Subsequently, the cost of paper had risen considerably because of the war. So Hadrat Wālā asked for 250 copies to be printed. He added: "If it is going to cost more than 1 000 rupees, the original donor should not be informed. Instead, I will give the additional cost and I will take the number of copies which are equal to the amount which I gave."

This is exactly what happened. Hadrat Wālā gave several hundred rupees from his side and some copies came into his share. This book was produced at the exact time when Hadrat Wālā's illness had become extremely severe. He used to wait daily for its arrival. When it finally arrived, special effects of joy were visible on his face. Hadrat Wālā personally distributed the copies which came into his share among his attendants. He instructed for the remaining copies to be sent to the Judge Sāhib who will do as he wills with them.

In short, Hadrat Wālā's temperament was always given to not postponing any work. The natural weakness which comes with his present age and the inundation of illnesses since a long time were all pointing to the approach of that day [when he will leave this world]. Bearing this in mind, his attention to these tasks was even more.

The writing of *Ahkām al-Qur'ān* was related to this weak servant. He had initially drawn attention to it in 1351 A.H. at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband when it was decided to initiate a Daurah Tafsīr course. He had pointed to the need for a book containing Qur'ānic proofs for Hanafī rulings, points of differences with the other Imāms and replies to these differences. Based on what the content of this should be, he gave it the title *Dalā'il al-Qur'ān ʿalā Masā'il an-Nuʿmān*, and delegated the task of writing it to me. This task was neither easy nor small. I commenced it according to the time which I had. Around this time, Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib had just completed his writing of *Iʿlā' as-Sunan* so Hadrat Wālā delegated this task to him. Coincidentally, a short while later the Maulānā got a

job in Dhaka so he proceeded there, and the work was postponed.

Hadrat Wālā became very concerned about this work in 1361 A.H. and wanted to get an ʿālim who was free to devote his time solely to this work so that it could be completed quickly. When this could not be realized, he decided to distribute the work among several scholars. Two manzils of the Qur'ān came into my share.

Due to certain events, I resigned officially from Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband in Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1362 A.H. and after freeing myself on 21 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah, I presented myself before Hadrat Wālā. After a consultation, it was decided that I will work on *Ahkām al-Qur'ān* in this free time of mine.

This was a time when Hadrat Wālā's illness and weakness were at their peak. Apart from the difficulty of moving about, he could not even speak for long periods of time. However, the natural demand and engrossment with Dīnī services which were embedded in his blessed heart had made every difficulty enjoyable.

In this condition of his, he made it a point that when I commenced with a sūrah, he would read it several times and when he came across any verse from which a ruling of the Sharīʿah could be derived, he would explain it to me. He would then advise me to search for the explanation in the different books of tafsīr, and if I find them coinciding with his explanation, I must include it with a reference to the tafsīr from which I found it. If I did not find it, I myself must ponder over it and if my heart was satisfied with it, I could write it with a reference to him.

In this way, I reached Sūrah an-Naml towards the end of Jumādā ath-Thāniyah. I had to go into a detailed explanation on the issue of knowledge of the unseen and this took quite some time. Hadrat Wālā asked me one day: "Have you completed [Sūrah an-] Naml?" I replied: "It is taking me long because I have to write a detailed explanation on the issue of knowledge of the unseen." He asked me again after two days. I still hadn't completed the discussion. I felt bad that Hadrat Wālā was waiting for it to be completed and I did not do it as yet. Hadrat Wālā was extremely considerate of the ease and relief of his attendants. This is why he did not ask me about it

for several days. And I myself did not have the courage to initiate any academic discussion before him because of his severe weakness.

After many days he asked me: "The discussion on the issue of knowledge of the unseen is probably not completed as yet?" I replied: "All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* it has been completed. Sūrah an-Naml has also been completed and I have already written on a few verses of Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ." Ḥaḍrat Wālā expressed his joy. He then spoke about the story in Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ wherein Ḥaḍrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* killed a Copt, sought forgiveness from Allāh *taʿālā* and Allāh *taʿālā* forgave him. Ḥaḍrat Wālā said: "I have a question on this. The Copt was an unbeliever and that too one who was a ḥarbī.[1] According to the rule of the Sharīʿah, it is permissible to kill such a person. Why, then, did Ḥaḍrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* seek forgiveness? Furthermore, Allāh's acceptance of his supplication further establishes the fact that his killing the Copt was inappropriate. My question is: What is the reason for considering the killing of a ḥarbī unbeliever to be impermissible or inappropriate?"

Ḥaḍrat Wālā then said: "I have thought about this for quite some time. When Muslims have a formal verbal or written covenant with unbelievers, it becomes obligatory on Muslims to uphold the conditions of the covenant. Similarly, sometimes a practical covenant takes place in the sense that they are safe from each other in their mutual social dealings and interactions. They engage in mutual business transactions without any fear of each other. This is a type of practical covenant for which they are obliged to uphold. If, at any time, Muslims have to attack such people, they will first have to inform them that the covenant is cancelled and they [unbelievers] must no longer feel safe from the Muslims. Each group then has the right to its own actions. Without the cancellation of the covenant, there is a type of excuse which – according to the Sharīʿah – cannot be trampled under any condition by any unbeliever."

"The incident with the Copt was of this nature because Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* together with the Banī Isrāʾīl who were associated to him, and the Copts were citizens of Pharaoh's

[1] An unbeliever who is at war with Muslims.

kingdom. They were all safe from each other. In such a situation, killing the Copt suddenly amounted to breaking this practical covenant. This is why Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* was reprimanded, he sought forgiveness and was forgiven."

"Another question could be posed at this point: Bearing in mind that this killing was a crime, how could Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* who is from among the senior Messengers and is divinely protected from sin have committed this crime? The answer is obvious, i.e. Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* did not kill him intentionally. He merely hit him lightly in order to move him aside but the Copt died. Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* therefore did not commit a sin. However, it appeared to be an act of disobedience. This is why he – being a Messenger of Allāh – considered it to be a sin and sought forgiveness."

Hadrat Wālā then said: "This is my thought. If you find support for it from the Qur'ān, Sunnah or the writings of the true ʿulamā', then you must write this explanation and attribute it to them [whichever source you obtained the support from]. If you do not find any support for it, you may attribute it to the one from whom you heard it [Hadrat Wālā is referring to himself] because I do not see any point here which is against the accepted rules and principles."

I replied to Hadrat Wālā that I will search for this explanation and present it to him. This statement was made in an assembly which was conducted on 1 Rajab 1362 A.H. and Hadrat Wālā departed from this world 15 days after that. I researched the above explanation the same day and – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* – I found support for it in *Sahīh Bukhārī* from a narration of Mughīrah ibn Shuʿbah and a clear explanation of it in Qastalanī's commentary of *Sahīh Bukhārī*. I intended to present it to Hadrat Wālā but he was either unconscious or drowsy most of the time. I did not get an opportunity to inform him.

I went to Deoband on 3rd Rajab because one of my relatives had fallen extremely ill, and my regret [at not being able to mention my findings to Hadrat Wālā] remained in my heart. Long after Hadrat Wālā's demise – after my heart and mind settled down a bit – I sat down to write the explanation of the verse. It was a time when there was neither anyone to correct my mistakes nor anyone to express joy over something beneficial which I wrote.

> Now where will the young plant find nurturing in the true sense of the word. On which land will the fully laden cloud of the heart rain.

Now my condition is that when I face any academic difficulty:

> How I wish I could meet you who have an answer for every difficult question! You can find a solution to everything without any hesitation.

However, if I am able to solve any complexity by virtue of Hadrat Wālā's company and I write something which – according to me – is good, then I cry over the fact that I do not have anyone to show it to who would express joy at seeing it and give due appreciation to it with duʿā's.

Just yesterday I was having a look at *Jamʿ al-Jawāmiʿ*, the famous book of ʿAllāmah Taqī ad-Dīn Subkī Shāfiʿī. It is on the principles of jurisprudence and its last chapter is on Sufism. In it I came across Hadrat Wālā's golden principle which – on its own comprises half of Sufism. That is, Hadrat Wālā's principle on whether something is within one's control or not, and whose explanation is fully known to all his attendants. The book under discussion takes this issue as a principle and solves the difficulties faced by seekers through it. On seeing it in this book, I immediately felt that I should take the book and present it to the examiner of meanings [Hadrat Wālā]. However, I came to my senses and was left holding my heart.

اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ، اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ، اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ

Hadrat Wālā had given me a few pieces of advice with regard to the writing of *Ahkām al-Qur'ān*. I had noted them there and then. These words are unique and priceless principles which serve as guiding lamps for not only every written work but for every Dīnī and worldly task. I feel I ought to quote them here. These are actually statements which were made at various times and not in one assembly.

Golden Principles For Academic And Practical Practices

1. Whatever time you have set aside for this work, you must make it a point to adhere strictly to it from the beginning. If you do not feel like doing that work on any day and this happens before you have commenced the work [for that day], then you must not bother. You must force yourself to do it. If

you do not feel like doing it after you have commenced for that day, they you must not compel yourself too much. Instead, leave aside the work for that day. The reason for this is that when it comes to practical works, the essential objective is reward. And this is acquired under any condition, whether you feel like doing it or not. As for academic works, the essential objective is for the work to be accomplished in a beneficial and useful way. This cannot be realized if there is no interest and eagerness on your part. However, if the absence of eagerness at the beginning of the task is going to be considered to be an excuse, then no work will be done.

2. If any thought or idea comes to your mind by the way and you think of writing on it, then you must write it very briefly. There is no benefit in details in the wrong places.

3. When you are investigating a juridical ruling, you must most certainly provide its reference from the books of jurisprudence. It is not necessary for it to be a statement of the Imām himself. Rather, the statements of the seniors of the madh-hab will suffice.

4. If, due to some need, you are unable to do any work on any particular day, you must certainly do a little work for that day – even if it means writing just one line. This is so that you are saved from the un-blessedness of missing a day's work. Hadrat Wālā added: This was the practice of Hadrat Maulānā Mamlūk ʽAlī Sāhib in his classes. If there were to be no lessons on a certain day, he would assemble all his students from the different classes in one sitting, and teach just one line from each lesson. There is a lot of blessing in this practice.

I [Muftī Muhammad Shafīʽ] say: This has always been the practice of Hadrat Wālā himself. The blessings of it can be seen in his various works.

I recall an incident which I had recorded in Ramadān 1357 A.H. The doctors advised Hadrat Wālā to do a bit of walking. Subsequently, he would walk out into the fields after ʽasr. I also used to accompany him. Wasl Sāhib Marhūm and a few others were also in the habit of walking daily to the railway line bridge which is over the pond. There is another bridge on the western side for ox-carts. They used to walk to this point daily. I thought to myself that Hadrat Wālā never walked even a step less than his normal distance. One day when he reached the

railway bridge, the road was blocked by cattle and oxen. He could not proceed further. So he turned back. However, he stepped aside from the daily return route and walked towards the railway station. We all proceeded with him but did not know why he was acting against his norm and walking towards the railway station. Then he himself said to us: "The distance which had been reduced [because it was blocked by the cattle] has now been covered by walking in this direction." One can gauge from this that if he was so particular about adhering to mere supererogatory works [such as a casual walk], then how much more particular he must be about adhering to works which are the objectives!

One day in the course of his walk he said: "I am very particular about adhering to my practices which are related to others. However, I am very free with regard to those which are related to my self. Consequently, I take a rest sometimes in the afternoons and sometimes I do not."

5. I have one statement of Hadrat Wālā which he made on 13 Ramadān 1354 A.H. and which I noted. It has great benefit in the task of writing and other academic works. Hadrat Khwājah 'Azīz al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was busy compiling *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. He had taken an extended leave for this purpose. Mention was made in Hadrat Wālā's assembly that Hadrat Khwājah Sāhib's leave is about to come to an end and he still has a lot of work left. So Hadrat Wālā said:

> I had always been saying that whatever little comes before you, you must note it down. Thereafter you have your entire life to make additions as you recall them. This is how work is done. But no one listens to old people. When a person is overtaken by the zeal of his youth, he feels he will write down everything. The end result is that he is unable to write anything.

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I now present those *Malfūzāt* in chronological order which I had personally noted in Hadrat Wālā's assemblies when he was on his death bed.

Note: It was Hadrat Wālā's practice not to allow his *Malfūzāt* to be printed without checking and editing them himself. He also gave permission provided one condition was met. As far as I

could, I took this condition into consideration. If, after this, there is still any shortcoming, then it must be attributed to me.

وما اريد الا الاصلاح ما استطعت، وما توفيقي الا بالله العلي العظيم

Muhammad Shafī' Deobandī, *may Allāh pardon him.*

18 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

1. Some people are in the habit of imposing their point. Even if it is shown to be wrong, they do not give up their point. They feel that honour lies in it. The fact of the matter is that even if the addressee keeps silent for whatever reason, his disdain for the person and the latter's ignorance become embedded in his heart. In addition to this, it causes harm to the person and is also sinful.

2. The fundamental quest in remaining in the company of the Sufi masters is to acquire their temperament which is purely a gift to them [from Allāh *ta'ālā*]. As for actions, these are within their control and choice and can change suddenly. However, a genuine and correct temperament sometimes cannot be achieved even in 50 years.

19 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

3. One statement of Maulwī 'Ubaydullāh Sindhī really appeals to me, although it may not be correct for the situation in which he said it. The Maulwī Sāhib requested me to write a commentary to the *Mathnawī* but I excused myself by saying that I do not even remember the special definitions. He said: "The real time for knowledge is when a person forgets the definitions." [Hadrat Wālā added]: He is an intelligent man and he is absolutely correct in what he said because as long as a person remembers definitions, he is overwhelmed by words. Once definitions are wiped out, meanings overwhelm the person [and this is of essence].

4. A Hadīth states that the ummat will be divided into 73 sects, 72 are destined to Hell while one shall go to Paradise. The question that comes up is that if being destined to Hell means that they will remain eternally in Hell, then the unbelief of all these sects is certain. And this is against the view of the Ahl as-Sunnah. If eternal stay in Hell is not meant, there will be no difference between the one successful sect and the remaining 72 sects because even those who committed evils

from the successful sect will be in Hell for a certain period of time. [Hadrat Wālā said]: The answer to this objection is that the punishment which will be meted out to the 72 sects will be because of incorrect beliefs, while the other will be punished for evil actions and not incorrect beliefs. All these Islamic sects which the Ahl as-Sunnah do not label as unbelievers will be protected against remaining in Hell for eternity.

5. I [Muftī Muhammad Shafī'] asked a question: In the Qur'ānic verse:

وَالشُّعَرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُنَ

As for the poets – it is only those who are in error that follow them.[1]

The error of the followers alludes to the error of those who are followed [i.e. the poets]. From this can we extract the rule that the person whose following is deviated be considered to be deviated as well? Hadrat Wālā replied: "Provided his following has an influence on the deviation. It must not be that he is following the person in something else while there are other causes for the deviation."

6. I am inclined to feel that the greatest proof of Rasūlullāh's prophet-hood is his spontaneity. It is not possible for something [or someone] to have no formality in anything without total and absolute honesty, in which everything is exposed without concealing anything in the least.

7. I was fifteen years old when I went to Deoband. I was considered to be a child but I was enthusiastic about attending the assemblies of the pious elders. I went to Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *rahimahullāh* on one occasion. He said: "Bhāi, you must be more concerned about counting than studying. There is a difference between the two." He then explained the difference with a story. He said: "There were two students. One had memorized *Hidāyah* the other had merely read it by looking inside. The one who had studied by looking inside said: 'Such and such text is in *Hidāyah*.' The memorizer rejected this. The other opened *Hidāyah* and showed the text to him, and said: 'The following ruling is derived from this text.' The memorizer acknowledged what the other said and added:

[1] Sūrah ash-Shu'arā', 26: 224.

'The fact of the matter is that you studied *Hidāyah* while I wasted my time in bearing a useless burden.'" This was really the true quality of our elders. I say without any fear of refutation that our Hadrat was in no way inferior to Ghazzālī and Rāzī.

8. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was proud of two individuals, viz. Maulānā Muhammad Ismāʿīl Shahīd for his intelligence and Maulānā Is-hāq Sāhib for his narrations. He used to read this verse:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَهَبَ لِيْ عَلَى الْكِبَرِ اِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ

All praise is due to Allāh who blessed me with Ismāʿīl and Is-hāq despite my old age.

9. Maulānā ʿAbd al-Bārī Sāhib Lucknowī asked: "Does piety have any influence on satisfaction of the heart?" Hadrat Wālā replied: "It certainly has. I have come to one more conclusion in this regard, viz. respect has a very major role and influence in it. In other words, respect for the elders. Our elders state that the major reason for the sciences and knowledge possessed by Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was his respect for elders."

10. Hadrat Wālā was speaking about the difference in dispositions of Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He said: The peculiar traits of each disposition are different. The benefit of one is general but not complete. The others is complete but not general. For the purpose of action, I am naturally inclined to the disposition which is complete even though it may not be general. However, in my interaction with others, I prefer the other [general] disposition. In other words, one must not be harsh and stern with others.

20 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

11. Hadrat Wālā was speaking about a certain person. He said: He was a religious man but he had one shortcoming, he considered himself to be religious. There was a need for him to obliterate himself.

12. Maulānā said in a dream:

> Either the concern of the head, the mind or of Dīn,
> my trial only revolves in one of these.

13. Our Hadrat Hājī Sāhib was a proof of Allāh on earth and a shadow of Allāh on earth. However, I say: Even if someone considers it to be a claim, everyone has not understood him. Yes, those whom he wanted to understand, Allāh *taʿālā* fulfilled His will and enabled them to understand.

14. Hadrat Mujaddid Sāhib *rahimahullāh* rightly said: "The person who has emulation of the Sunnah and love for his shaykh has acquired everything. Even if a person sees darkness in the presence of these two, it is considered to be light. If there is any deficiency in any of these two, then even if a person sees light, it is considered to be darkness." Hadrat Wālā added: I am of the view that even love for the shaykh is not the actual objective. It is also a means for emulation of the Sunnah. The fact of the matter is that the fundamental thing is what was brought by the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* and which was sent via the angels, viz. orders and prohibitions. While following these, no matter what type of unintentional conditions and states a person experiences, they will not be harmful in the least.

21 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

15. Hadrat Wālā's illness was continuing. His weakness was increasing by the day. However, by virtue of his Allāh-bestowed courage, he carried out all his tasks at their appointed times. He had the practice of conducting an assembly after zuhr at the house of Maulwī Jamīl Ahmad Sāhib which was next to the female section of Hadrat Wālā's house. It was the season of hot winds and intense heat. Add to this his physical debility. It was no easy task to come here, yet he came daily.

One day, the moment he arrived, a person said something which was against Hadrat Wālā's temperament. This caused a change in him. He said: "People do not look at my weak state. My condition is such that I feel extremely fatigued by taking just two steps out of my house. When I go back from here, I will fall onto my bed. I will not be able to perform wudū' or perform salāh for a long time [because I will have to catch my breath and regain my strength]. It is not my habit to continually sing and talk about my condition. The thing which needs to be spoken about is Allāh's name. Of what benefit is there in mentioning someone's condition unnecessarily?

22 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

16. As per the instruction of Hadrat Wālā, I [Muhammad Shafīʿ] was in Thānah Bhawan working on *Ahkām al-Qur'ān*. I reached the Friday morning assembly a bit late, so he asked me: "What, have you done some work today as well?" I replied: "Hadrat, I did do some work today also. I do not like to miss out on any day." Hadrat Wālā said: "That is how work ought to be done. One has to remain attached to it." I said: "Hadrat, this task is such that I should not even have taken the courage to take it up. However, while in Hadrat Wālā's service, I did not even imagine that I am bearing a heavy load." Hadrat Wālā said: "People of the past also wrote: 'I am not qualified for this task.' Yet, Allāh *taʿālā* took a lot of work from them. This is the key to success, i.e. we [must thing to ourselves that we] are not qualified. The fact of the matter is that Allāh *taʿālā* takes work from whomever He wills whenever He wills." He added:

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا

Whatever of mercy Allāh opens up for the people, none can withhold it.[1]

Hadrat Wālā made duʿā' that Allāh *taʿālā* opens the gates of mercy.

It is related that when Hadrat Yūsuf *ʿalayhis salām* tried to flee from Zulaykhā, he found all the doors locked. However, he did not stop in his efforts to escape when he saw the doors locked. He ran towards a door and Allāh *taʿālā* helped him. Whichever door he ran towards, the lock would break and fall, and the door would open.

When you look at a long road from a distance, then it seems as though the trees on either side of the road are meeting. As though the road is coming to an end at the point where the trees of either side are meeting. An inexperienced driver sees this and feels that if he is going to continue on this road, he will meet in an accident, so he stops there and then. Such a driver will never cover the distance. But if he continues driving, he will find the road opening out to him as he proceeds.

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[1] Sūrah Fātir, 35: 2.

17. A splinter got into Hadrat Wālā's hand. He removed it and said: "There is a lesson to be learnt from this. Look! The body cannot tolerate the slightest foreign object to enter it. How, then, can any extraneous thing be accommodated in the heart? Unfortunately, due to an absence of feeling in our heart, we are not disturbed by futile thoughts. However, the Ahlullāh are even more discomforted by such thoughts than they are with a splinter. Look at the pure words of the Hadīth which express this theme:

الإثم ما حاك في صدرك

Sin is what makes an impression on your heart.

18. I cannot tolerate for a single minute to sacrifice the convenience of others for my own convenience. If I am not able to be even self-sacrificing [by giving preference to others], I will at least not cause any inconvenience to others.

23 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

19. A person who was suffering from certain worldly calamities wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā and said: "I fear an evil end. I feel as though Allāh *taʿālā* is displeased with me." Hadrat Wālā said: "It is not even remotely connected to an evil end. In fact, calamities and pains are strong aides to a good end. A person's acceptance [in Allāh's court] increases through them. In fact, if he did not have acceptance previously, he acquires it now. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاَمَّا الْاِنْسَانُ اِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَاَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُوْلُ رَبِّيْ اَكْرَمَنِ. وَاَمَّا اِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ فَيَقُوْلُ رَبِّيْ اَهَانَنِ.

As for man, when his Sustainer tests him by giving him honour and bounties, he says: "My Sustainer has honoured me." But when He tests him by restricting his sustenance, he says: "My Sustainer has disgraced me."[1]

The person's error was removed in this way. That is, calamities neither indicate that a person is rejected by Allāh *taʿālā* nor do comforts and luxuries indicate that he is accepted in Allāh's sight.

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[1] Sūrah al-Fajr, 89: 15-16.

Hadrat Wālā said: People have become accustomed to running after taʿwīdh and other practices, but they pay no attention to duʿā' nor do they believe in it. I am not saying that this is their belief, but their approach to taʿwīdh and other practices seems to demonstrate that they firmly believe that Allāh *taʿālā* will fulfil their needs through them. Allāh forbid, it is as though they feel that Allāh *taʿālā* has no alternative but to fulfil their needs. As for duʿā', they feel Allāh *taʿālā* has the choice of accepting and not accepting.

21. Some Sufis relate this witticism. They say that linguistically and in common understanding, a person is considered *bāligh* when *manī* (semen) issues forth from him. While, according to the Sufis, a *bāligh* person is one who is expelled from *minā*, i.e. he is free from any claims and presumptions.

22. The Muʿtazilah claim that it is against the purity of Allāh *taʿālā* to believe that He is the creator of evils. However, the erudite scholars say that the creation of evils demonstrates more of Allāh's absolute and total power.

When an expert calligrapher writes the letter *jīm* very beautifully, it will not be considered to be such a great feat as opposed to if he wrote it by spoiling its appearance to the extent that no one can recognize who wrote it.

I [the compiler] add to this: A person who can drive a fast car or motorbike at a slow speed is considered to be a more adept driver [than the one who drives it fast]. (Muhammad Shafīʿ)

25 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

23. A Hadīth states:

لا تنظروا إلى ذنوب العباد كأنكم أرباب

Do not look at the sins of people as though you yourself are God and they are trampling on one of your rights.

A person asked me: "Is it permissible to offer salām to a person who does not perform salāh?" I replied: "It is obligatory on you to offer salām to him." I said this because I perceived that he looks at the other with scorn and is proud because he considers himself to be absolved.

We ought to show mercy to sinners, as we do to sick people. However, because a sinner commits a sin by his own choice, rational abhorrence for him is enough. Let it not happen that you denounce him all the time.

24. It is mentioned in *ar-Rahmah al-Muhdāt* that a Prophet passed by a graveyard which had new graves. When he went close, he learnt that most of them were being punished. He made duʻā' and continued on his way. He passed by the same graveyard after quite some time when most of the graves were ruined. When he went close, he learnt that all of them have been forgiven and are enjoying the delights of Paradise. He was astonished and asked Allāh *taʻālā*: "They obviously did not do any actions after they passed away. How, then, were they forgiven?" Allāh *taʻālā* replied: "When their graves became dilapidated and ruined, and there was no one to inquire about them, I felt sorry for them and forgave them." Hadrat Wālā added: "You see, there is one more advantage in having a bare grave [with nothing built around it]."

25. It is popularly believed that one of the wives of Hadrat ʻAlī *radiyallāhu ʻanhu* was a female jinn from whom Muhammad ibn al-Hanafīyyah was born. I asked Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʻqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* about it so he said: "It is the habit of Arabs to attribute every strange occurrence to the jinn. They refer to an excellent and strange thing as *ʻuqrā* because *ʻuqar* is the name of a valley which is believed to be inhabited by jinn. Similarly, someone said in praise of Muhammad ibn al-Hanafīyyah and his brothers as follows:

بنو جنّيّة مولدت سيوفا

They are the children of a female jinn who gave birth to swords.

From this, someone misconstrued it to mean that they are the offspring of a female jinn. Whereas the fact of the matter is that because of their extraordinary bravery, the poet referred to them as "children of a female jinn".

26. On one occasion, Maulānā Anwar Shāh Sāhib related a strange narration in Murādābād when someone asked him: "Are the jinn also buried in the ground like humans?" He replied: "No. They are buried in the air." He added: "It is not rationally far-fetched because the fundamental of burial is for a

creation to be conveyed to the essential element from which it was created. Man's major essential element is soil, so he is buried in the soil. It is not far-fetched to assume that the major essential element of jinn is fire or air, and that they are conveyed to it after they die."

"My maternal uncle was a very intelligent man. He used to say: It seems as though the Hindu practice of cremating their dead has come from the practice of their gods because they are jinn. It is possible that because their origin is fire, they cremate their deceased. On seeing them – the gods – doing this, the Hindus imitated them without understanding the origin." Hadrat Wālā added: "This is not a narration but it is also not far-fetched."

26 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

27. When Hadrat Maulānā Ismāʿīl Shahīd *rahimahullāh* and his companions left for jihād, they obliterated themselves to such an extent that they did not even carry food utensils with them. They used to wash one corner of a masjid, pour their food onto the floor and eat directly from there. When they finished eating, they would wash the floor once again. This despite the fact that their army contained many wealthy people and princes.

28. Hadrat Sayyid [Ahmad Shahīd] Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was unsuccessful because the people on whom he relied were not worthy of being relied on. They were not there at the time of difficulty.

29. Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* with a unique comprehensiveness. He had a view on every matter. He used to say: "Shāh Jahān was a more capable king than ʿĀlamgīr while the latter was certainly more religious."

لکل فن رجال

There are specific people for every type of work.

27 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1362 A.H.

30. A person presented some sweetmeat to Hadrat Sultān Nizām ad-Din *rahimahullāh*. One of those who was in the assembly said:

الهدايا مشترك

Gifts have to be shared.

He was making reference to the following Hadīth:

من أهدي له هدية فجلسائه شركاؤه

When a person receives a gift in any assembly, those who seated with him are also partners in the gift.

Hadrat Nizām ad-Dīn said: "O brother! You can have all of it." The man replied: "You are acting against the Hadīth." Hadrat said: "No. What the Hadīth means is that the person who receives the gift must not keep it for himself, he must include others who are seated with him. I am giving all of it to you and not keeping anything for myself. How can this be in conflict with the Hadīth?"

Hadrat Wālā said: Hadrat Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* explained this Hadīth as follows: "It refers to food and drink items which are normally distributed and eaten in an assembly. Cash money or clothing are not included." He added: "The meaning of this statement of Hadrat Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* is the original principle which is both rational and traditional. That is, the gift falls in the ownership of the person for whom the giver intended. Others are not partners in it. However, in some instances, the general norm is for people to bring foods and drinks to an assembly with the intention of distributing it to all who are present, but out of respect for the assembly, the gift is placed before the elder [the one conducting the assembly]. In such a case, all those who are present in the assembly certainly have a right over what was presented. This is the import of the Hadīth. It does not refer to normal gifts. Allāh knows best.

I [the compiler] say: First of all the Hadīth experts have reservations about the authenticity of this Hadīth. ʿAllāmah Tāhir Muftī *rahimahullāh* states in *Tadhkirah al-Maudūʿāt* that most scholars have reservations about this Hadīth. However, by Hadrat Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* explaining it in this way [as explained above], shows that he considered it worthy of being presented as a proof. When a Mujtahid uses a Hadīth as proof, it falls under the ruling of affirming that Hadīth, as is established in the principles. (Muhammad Shafīʿ)

31. When any people are engrossed in doing something against the truth, we ought to work against them. However, it is essential to abstain from evil thoughts and verbal abuses because this will bring harm to us.

32. A novice must not worry too much about whether a certain act of his was a sin or not. And if it was, how serious was it? Instead, when he suspects that a certain thing which he did was sinful, he must consider it to be a sin, make up for it, seek forgiveness and continue with what he was originally supposed to be doing.

33. The ʿulamā' have written that there is no progress in engrossment and it is not something of much excellence. Instead, sometimes when a person cannot bear a certain excellence, then Allāh *taʿālā* – as a way of giving him a prize – causes him to become engrossed so that he does not perceive any calamity. It is similar to making a person inhale chloroform before an operation.

11 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1362 A.H.

34. People do calculations and computations in their heart and want the whole world to run according to that. When this does not happen, they fall into misery. The pure Sharīʿah has a unique balance for everything. There can never be any distress from it. Look! A Sahābī said to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

إن امرأتي لا تردد لامس

My wife does not stop any person from touching her.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Divorce her." The Sahābī said: "I love her." In other words, if I were to divorce her, I will become distressed and I might fall into sin with her. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Retain her [do not divorce her]." The first instruction was based on the demand of the person's pride and self-respect. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* learnt that it was difficult for him to bear this, he permitted him to retain her in his marriage. What this meant was that efforts must be made to protect and safeguard her. If she still does something wrong, you will be absolved of it, and she will be answerable for it.

لَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِّزْرَ اُخْرٰى

No bearer of burden will bear the burden of another.

Man must make as much arrangements which are within his power. After that he must not worry about the calculations, estimations and expectations which he has to be according to what he wants.

35. Allāh *taʿālā* has set a limit for each thing. The eyes can see up to a certain distance and not beyond. The ears can hear to a certain extent and not beyond. Similarly, the intellect can grasp to a certain point, it cannot go beyond that. I do not know why people think that its power to grasp is unlimited. When their intellects cannot understand a thing, they want to reject it.

36. The easy and short method must be adopted in every task. To fall into unnecessary prolongation and difficulty is both irrational and also against the Sunnah. Allāh *taʿālā* had conferred such strength and courage to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with which he could have borne as much difficulty as he wanted, and he could have practised on the obligatory ordinances alone [without practising on the concessions]. Despite this, it was his noble practice that when he was given a choice between two tasks, he would always opt for the one which was easier and simpler. The wisdom behind this was so that the ummah could follow the Sunnah, the weak ones from the ummah are not deprived of following the Sunnah, and they are not grieved at being deprived of this. Obviously, there was no one who had more reliance [on Allāh *taʿālā*], abstinence and contentment than Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Despite this, he used to give one year's supply of grain to his wives. He did this so that the ummah does not feel restricted in this regard.

After making the above statement, Hadrat Wālā addressed [Hadrat] Khwājah Sāhib and said: "Khwājah Sāhib! These are points which need to be noted. You will probably not find them anywhere after me."

Maulwī Fadl Haq Sāhib Khayrābādī used to say: "The law and the cure will be trampled after me."

Maulwī ʿAbd as-Samīʿ Sāhib Meerutī came to Kānpūr on one occasion so I requested him to deliver a talk. Although he was against our elders with regard to the current bidʿāt, he would not say anything wrong in his lectures. This is why I did not

consider it harmful to request him to deliver a talk. The Maulwī S̲āh̲ib had quoted one of his poems in the talk. I recall one of its couplets:

> Where will you find this poor soul (in future)? Show
> it some hospitality for a few days.

I [the compiler] say: The mood of the assembly changed completely when we heard this from H̲ad̲rat Wālā's blessed tongue. The moment my friend got up from the assembly, he said to me: "Maulwī S̲āh̲ib! It seems as though very little time is left for H̲ad̲rat's company." Unfortunately, even at that time no one even imagined that he will depart from this world within one month.

The astonishing thing is that the benefits and blessings of the assembly had more or less ceased from that very day. Although he continued benefiting us until the end, the manner in which his normal assemblies used to be conducted no longer remained.

37. We cannot even estimate the extent of Allāh's mercy, and which of His favours we can ever thank Him for sufficiently. If we look at the style of the Qur'ān we will realize that it centres around human emotions, human intellect and human perception. It uses the same modes of expression which are used by man. This, notwithstanding the fact that there is no comparison whatsoever between the Being and speech of Allāh *taʿālā*, and our intellect and understanding. It is an immense mercy on man that Allāh *taʿālā* came down to the level of man's understanding and addressed him accordingly. Without any similarity at all, His example is like how elders speak to children and try to win them over by adopting their ways of expression.

The following and other similar expressions are to be found in several places of the Qur'ān:

لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ

Perhaps you may be shown mercy.

The commentators of the Qur'ān delve into the import of the word *laʿalla* which means "perhaps" and expresses doubt. It is known for a fact that Allāh *taʿālā* has absolute knowledge of everything, there is no possibility of doubt in His speech. This

is why the scholars provide various explanations. Some of them say that *laʿalla* in this context is used for certainty and not doubt. However, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said that these are unnecessary formalities. The fact of the matter is that this word is used to come down to man's level of perception. Man ought to have a doubt or uncertainty on this occasion. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* expressed it with a word which demonstrates doubt."

Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib did not acquire these sciences through a lot of reading. Rather, Allāh *taʿālā* created a light in his heart through which these points were exposed to him. No one pours water in a well, it gushes forth from within. Similarly, all the sciences which the Ahlullāh have are not exposed to them from the outside. This is why some elders state: "Do not worry too much about collating the statements of the Sufi masters. Instead, worry about becoming like the one who is making the statements so that the same type of sciences may emanate from your tongue."

38. Allāh *taʿālā* had knowledge that there will also be in this ummah people who will be overpowered by sleep and lethargy, and that they will miss their salāhs. Out of consideration to such people, Allāh *taʿālā* caused one salāh of His Rasūl to be missed so that the people may obtain an excellent example from him.

فسبحان من رؤف رحيم

Glory to the affectionate and merciful one.

14 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1362 A.H.

39. I do not say that ʿulamā' should not go to the rich because necessity is a thing which compels a person.

Hadrat Wālā made the above statement when in the assembly there was a discussion about an erudite scholar making efforts to obtain a job in the Hyderabad parliament, and although intercessions were made in his favour, his application was unsuccessful.

40. Humiliation is essentially the presentation of one's need. If a person is wearing torn clothes, worn out shoes, and patched garments, then this is most definitely not humiliation.

Hadrat Wālā added: A person must be free, he must not become restricted to an attendant. He must get into the habit of doing things himself. This has always been my habit even though I have studied a bit about Dīn and remained in the company [of elders]. The same was the case with my brother, Akbar ʿAlī. All this is through the blessings of the pious elder through whose prayers we were born.[1]

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[1] Refer to the section on Hadrat Wālā's birth to learn the incident surrounding his birth. (translator)

DEPUTYSHIP

We are generally asked – either in writing or verbally – who is Hadrat Wālā's deputy? It is surprising. How can a shaykh who is unique as regards his excellent knowledge, piety, cognition, love [for Allāh] and instruction – in short, in all aspects – and who is the Mujaddid and Imām of his time, a personality to whom 'ulamā' revert, and an erudite Sufi have a deputy? As for service of Dīn, this is being carried out by his Mujāzīn who are listed below. They are rendering all sorts of services and are occupied in their respective works. If it [the question about a deputy] stems from the belief that it is essential to have someone in Thānah Bhawan, and in the Khānqāh specifically, then it [the question] is most probably based on the custom of *sajjādgī* which has been initiated by materialists. Hadrat Wālā explained the evils and Shar'ī harms of this custom in section two of the addendum to his book *Islāh ar-Rusūm*. He also devoted a booklet to this subject. The book is titled *Sajjādah Nashīn* and is an addendum to his book, *Tuhfah ash-Shuyūkh*. It was written and published in 1347 A.H. A selected portion of it is presented here.

There are three forms of *sajjādgī* or deputyship:

1. The murīds assemble and appoint a son, relative or attendant as a *sajjādah nashīn*.
2. Other *sajjādah nashīn* mashā'ikh appoint him.
3. The shaykh himself appoints someone on his own or through the participation of other mashā'ikh.

Each of these three forms can be divided into three different situations:

1. The one who is appointed as a *sajjādah nashīn* is not qualified for the task of rectification and instruction, and is also caught up in fabricated and baseless customs.
2. He is not involved in fabricated and baseless customs, but is not qualified for the task of rectification and instruction.
3. He is qualified for the task of rectification and instruction.

If he is involved in fabricated and baseless customs then this is an extremely despicable level. If he is unqualified, then those who follow him and pledge bayʿah to him after considering him to be a shaykh and pious person, then the sin and burden of the deviation of all these people will also fall on those who made efforts to install him [as the deputy]. This sin and burden will continue falling on them for as long as the spiritual chain continues.

In the first form, it is the action of ignorant people and stems from absolute ignorance. In the second and third forms, it is a testimony to his excellence and being a leader. And a testimony is only permissible when one has full knowledge of the situation. Here, knowledge of his qualification is unknown. In fact, it is known that he is unqualified. The act is therefore impermissible, it is a deception, and a cause of deviation for the creation of Allāh *taʿālā*. It is because of this that countless sins and thousands of innovations spread from the person himself and then to others. This is a glaring fact to all.

As for the third form, i.e. he is qualified for the task of rectification and instruction, outwardly there seems to be no harm in it. However, when examined deeply, then it also contains many evils. For example, the murīds generally consider the deputy to hold the exact position as that of the shaykh, and they give preference to him over all the khulafā' even though the latter may be more qualified than him. Those who have faith in the deputy will assemble as many seekers as they can, and bring them to the deputy in whatever way they can. They consider the deputy to be the sole one to be reverted to merely because he is sitting in the shaykh's place. So much so, if his qualification no longer remains or changes, they consider it disrespectful to leave him and believe that it entails humiliation to the shaykh. They will do whatever they can to keep him in place. This results in the same custom-worship.

The above-mentioned evil is present. As time passes, ensuring that the place [of the shaykh] is kept occupied then becomes the essential objective. Sometimes, even that qualified deputy now begins to worry about who is going to take his place after him. Thereafter, no distinction remains between who is qualified and who is not. And like monetary inheritance, this position [of deputy] also becomes an inherited position. Making the place the objective results in believing it to be so sanctified

that if an objection is made against the person who is seated there or he is taken to account for something, then it is considered to be a disparagement of the place or the shaykh. Whereas there is no place which is more sanctified than the Kaʿbah. Yet, when those who were in charge of its upkeep were unqualified, Allāh *taʿālā* rejected them by saying:

وَمَا كَانُوْا اَوْلِيَاءَهُ، اِنْ اَوْلِيَاؤُهُ اِلَّا الْمُتَّقُوْنَ. وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ.

They are not its guardians. Its only guardians are those who are righteous, but most of them are unaware of it.[1]

It is therefore safest to give permission for rectification and instruction to those who are qualified even if they do not have any ties of kinship. However, there must be no worry or concern about who is going to take one's place. The one who is qualified must then deal with his khalīfah in the same way and this must continue for as long as Allāh *taʿālā* wills. Someone rightly said with reference to not allowing one's self to be influenced by who is qualified for the place and who is not:

> Hasan from Basra, Bilāl from Abyssinia, Suhayb from Rome and Abū Lahab from the sand of Makkah, how strange is this indeed!

This brings us to the end of the selected extract.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* this has been the practice of all our elders. That is, they gave permission for rectification and instruction, and those who were given permission could then live wherever they wanted and could continue serving Dīn there. Hadrat Miyājī Nūr Muhammad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was in Lauhārī. His khulafā', Hadrat Hājī Sāhib, Hadrat Hāfiz Muhammad Dāmin Sāhib and Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib were in Thānah Bhawan. If any one of them had placed so much of importance on the place as is generally observed nowadays, he could have lived in Lauhārī because it is not so far away. It is just three miles from Thānah Bhawan. Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* emigrated in 1857 and left Thānah Bhawan. Our Hadrat Wālā was not even born at the time. However, if Hadrat Hājī Sāhib or any of the other khulafā' had placed any importance to occupying this place specifically, then anyone from Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib,

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[1] Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 34.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib and others would have lived in Thānah Bhawan. Qādī Muhammad Ismāʿīl Sāhib who was the khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muhammad Sāhib did not settle down here. Instead, he went to his hometown, Mangalore. None of the khulafā' of Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib did this. Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib remained in Sahāranpūr, Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Rahīm Sāhib lived in Rāipūr, Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib was in Deoband and Hadrat Maulānā Siddīq Ahmad Sāhib remained in Mālīr Kautlah or Ambhetah. The same can be said of the other khulafā' of these personalities.

Our elders purified and cleansed the Dīn of all these impure customs. It is therefore most surprising to see those of their spiritual lineage thinking of adopting those customs!

In short, no one has been appointed to the customary post of a deputy of Hadrat Wālā. However, his blessings still continue and – all praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* - his khulafā' have initiated khānqāhs in their respective places. The names of these khulafā' are listed below. This list contains the names of those whom we know were alive at the time of Hadrat Wālā's demise and have been permitted to accept bayʿah and to instruct others.

As for Khānqāh Ashrafīyyah and its programmes of Qur'ān studies, Arabic, Persian, writing and compiling, arrangements for the stay of seekers, etc. all this is, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, continuing to this day. These continue under the supervision of Maulānā Shabbīr ʿAlī Sāhib who is the trustee and principal of the Khānqāh. The decreed time was bound to come and the Khānqāh was bound to be devoid of Hadrat Wālā. It is not possible to make up for this loss. As for all other arrangements, they continue as they always had been. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, no change has taken place as yet. Yes, one thing is certainly saddening, viz. the number of attendants frequenting it has dropped drastically, and it is not within the people here to ask them to come. If all attendants make it a point of coming here whenever they get a chance, and spending a few days in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, then the splendour of the Khānqāh would remain in tact. Those who come will also acquire the blessings of the Khānqāh.

This ought to be done by all the attendants. Every person must take out some time and come to the Khānqāh. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, arrangements for people coming here are still in place. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

The list of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' now follows. He had two types of khulafā, Mujāzīn-e-Bayʿat and Mujāzīn-e-Suhbat. Both are provided below.

List Of Khulafā'

This list has been compiled from volume three of *Ashraf as-Sawānih* and from parts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of its other sections. Those of Hadrat Wālā's khulafā' who passed away during his life time or those who permission was withdrawn by Hadrat Wālā and their names subsequently published in the sections are not included in this list. This list contains the names of khulafā' who were alive at the time of Hadrat Wālā's demise and were also granted permission by him. Those whose demise we came to know of while compiling this list have been highlighted in the footnotes together with the date of their demise. If anyone whose name is not in this list and he still claims that he is a khalīfah of Hadrat Wālā, then he is wrong.

Mujāzīn-e-bay'at

1. Maulwī Muhammad ʿĪsā Sāhib,[1] professor of Arabic, Allāhābād.

2. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib, principal of Raudatul ʿUlūm, Phulpūr, district Aʿzamgarh.

3. Hājī Sher Muhammad Sāhib, Sukkhur (Sindh).

4. Maulwī Afdal ʿAlī Sāhib, Bārah Bankī.

5. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, Gaurgānoh.

6. Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib, Assistant Inspector Madāris, Lucknow.

7. Maulwī Habībullāh Sāhib, Persian teacher at Government High School, Jālūn.

8. Maulwī Wāhid Bakhsh Sāhib, Bhāwalpūr.

9. Hājī Shamshād ʿAlī Sāhib, Thānah Bhawan.

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[1] He passed away on 25 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1363 A.H.

10. Muhammad ʿAbdullāh Khān Sāhib, Bhopal.

11. Sayyid Fakhr ad-Dīn Shāh Sāhib, Sukkhur (Sindh).

12. Maulwī Saghīr Muhammad Sāhib, Bengal.

13. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, North Wazīrastān.

14. Maulwī At-har ʿAlī Sāhib, district Memon Singh.

15. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Sāhib, Chātgām.

16. Abul Barakāt Sāhib, Sultānpūr (for the masses only).

17. Maulwī Nadhīr Ahmad Sāhib, Karnāl.

18. Maulwī Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib,[1] Allāhābād.

19. Maulwī ʿAbd as-Salām Sāhib, Peshawar.

20. Maulwī Muhammad Mūsā Sāhib, a teacher at Masjid-e-Nabawī, Bāb an-Nisā', Madīnah Munawwarah (Muhājir Madanī).

21. Maulwī Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib, Madras.

22. Maulwī Nadhīr Ahmad Sāhib, Muzaffar Nagar.

23. Maulwī Maqsūd ʿAlī Sāhib, Barīsāl.

24. Maulwī Wasīyyullāh Sāhib, Aʿzamgarh.

25. Maulwī Muhammad Husayn Sāhib, head teacher at Madrasah Nuʿmānīyyah, Amritsar.

26. Maulwī Sirāj Ahmad Khān Sāhib Amrohī, Murādābād.

27. Maulwī Mumtāz Ahmad Sāhib, Saundyāgiyā.

28. Munshī Haqdād Sāhib, Lucknow.

29. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Jabbār Sāhib, Fīrozpūr.

30. Maulwī Walī Ahmad Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah Qādirīyyah, Murādābād.

31. Maulwī Khayr Muhammad Sāhib, rector at Madrasah Fayd Muhammadī, Jālandhar.

32. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib Kāmilpūrī, teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

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[1] Passed away on 14 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1363 A.H. after maghrib in Allāhābād.

33. Maulwī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib, principal of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

34. Maulwī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib, Dār al-Ishāʿat, Deoband.

35. Maulwī Muhammad Nabīh Sāhib, Murādābād.

36. Maulwī Muhammad Sābir Sāhib, Murādābād.

37. Nawāb Ahmad ʿAlī Khān Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

38. Hakīm Karam Husayn Sāhib,[1] Sītāpūr (Audh).

39. Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib, Allāhābād.

40. Hājī Muhammad ʿUthmān Khān Sāhib, Delhi.

41. Master Qabūl Ahmad Sāhib, assistant master at Government High School, Sītāpūr.

42. Maulwī Jalīl Ahmad Sāhib, ʿAlīgarh.

43. Shihāb ad-Dīn Sāhib, Meerut.

44. Maulwī Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib, Jalālābād.

45. Maulwī Murtadā Hasan Sāhib, Bijnor.

46. Hakīm ʿAbd al-Khāliq Sāhib,[2] Punjab.

47. Master Thāmin ʿAlī Sāhib, Government High School, Lalatpūr.

48. Hāfiz ʿInāyat ʿAlī Sāhib, Ludhiyānā (for the masses only).

49. Maulwī Walī Muhammad Sāhib, Gaurdā Sapūr.

50. Maulwī Nūr Bakhsh Sāhib, Chātgām.

51. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Wadūd Sāhib, Peshawar.

52. Maulwī Asʿadullāh Sāhib Rāmpūrī, a teacher at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

53. Maulwī Hakīm Ilāhī Bakhsh Sāhib, Sukkhur, Sindh.

54. Master Muhammad Sharīf Sāhib, a teacher at District Board School, Punjab.

55. Master Sher Muhammad Sāhib, a teacher at District Board Model School, Punjab.

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[1] Passed away on 10 Dhū al-Hijjah 1363 A.H.
[2] Passed away on 8 February 1945.

56. Hāfiz Walī Muhammad Sāhib, Farkhābād.

57. Maulwī Kifāyatullāh Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah Saʿīdīyyah, Shāhjahānpūr.

58. Maulwī Hāmid Hasan Sāhib Amrauhī, Meerut.

59. Hakīm Fadlullāh Sāhib, Sindh.

60. Bābū ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sāhib, Gujrānwālā.

61. Maulwī Rasūl Khān Sāhib, a teacher at Oriental College, Lahore.

62. Maulwī Muhammadullāh Sāhib, a teacher at Madrasah Ashraf al-ʿUlūm, Dhāka.

63. Hakīm Maulwī ʿAbd al-Haq Khān Sāhib, Fatahpūr.

64. Hakīm Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

65. Mahmūd al-Ghanī Sāhib Sahāranpūrī, Hyderabad, Deccan.

66. Munshī ʿAbd al-Hayy Sāhib, previously a lawyer and now a homoeopathic doctor, Jaunpūr.

67. Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Sāhib, Dār al-Musannifīn, Aʿzamgarh.

68. Maulānā ʿAbd al-Bārī Sāhib, Jāmiʿah ʿUthmānīyyah, Hyderabad Deccan.

69. Maulwī Abrār al-Haq Sāhib, Madrasah Islāmīyyah, Hardoi.

70. Maulwī Faqīr Muhammad Sāhib, Sarhad.

Mujāzīn-e-suhbat

1. Saʿīd Ahmad Khān Sāhib, Balrām, Aytah.

2. Hāfiz ʿAlī Nazar Baig Sāhib, Murādābād.

3. Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Sāhib, Lucknow.

4. Maulwī Mahmūd al-Haq Sāhib, Hardoi.

5. Munshī ʿAbd al-Walī Sāhib, Bahrā'ich Audh.

6. Shaykh Muhammad ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib, pensioner session judge, Karachi.

7. Muhammad Jalīl Sāhib, sub-judge, Sahāranpūr.

8. Maulwī Anwār al-Hasan Sāhib, honorary magistrate, Lucknow.

9. Munshī ʿAlī Shākir Sāhib, Lakhīmpūr.

10. Muhammad Najm Ahsan Sāhib, Partābgarh.

11. Maulwī Manfaʿat ʿAlī Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

12. Munshī ʿAlī Sajjād Sāhib, deputy collector, Jaunpūr.

13. Mazhar Ahmad Sāhib, Bhopal.

14. Hāfiz Muhammad Tāhā Sāhib, Gorukhpūr.

15. Khwājah Muhammad Sādiq Sāhib, Amritsar.

16. Munshī ʿAbd as-Sabūr Sāhib, Shāhjahānpūr.

17. Bakhshish Ahmad Sāhib, Gorukhpūr.

18. Hāfiz Liqā'ullāh Sāhib Pānīpattī, Hyderabad, Deccan.

19. Maulwī Zuhūr al-Hasan Sāhib, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm, Sahāranpūr.

20. Maulwi Ishfāq ar-Rahmān Sāhib Kāndhlawī, a teacher at Fatahpūrī Delhi.

21. Maulwī Sultān Mahmūd Sāhib, head teacher at Fatahpūrī Delhi.

22. Hāfiz Muhammad Ismāʿīl Sāhib, Delhi.

23. Munshī Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib, Ruhtak.

24. Maulwī ʿAbd as-Samad Sāhib Banārsī, Kānpūr.

25. Maulwī Hamīd Hasan Sāhib Deobandī, Kautlah.

26. Maulwī Riyād al-Hasan Sāhib, Meerut.

27. Hakīm Muhammad Saʿīd Sāhib Gangohī, Sahāranpūr.

28. Munshī ʿAbd al-Hamīd Sāhib, Lucknow.

29. ʿAbd al-Ghafūr Sāhib, Jaudpūr.

30. Hakīm Fayyād ʿAlī Sāhib, Bhopal.

31. Maulwī Mahmūd Dāwūd Yūsuf Sāhib, Rander, Surat.

32. Mīr Imām ad-Dīn Sāhib, Hyderabad, Deccan.

33. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Majīd Sāhib, Aʿzamgarh.

34. Maulwī Muhammad Miyā Sāhib, Allāhābād.

35. Maulwī Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib Binnaurī, Majlis ʿIlmī, Dhābel, Surat.

36. ʿAlī Sājid Sāhib, homoeopathic doctor, Lucknow.

37. Maulwī Saʿīd Ahmad Sāhib Lucknowī, head teacher at Madrasah Takmīl al-ʿUlūm, Kānpūr.

38. Sayyid Maulwī ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib, Sarhad.

39. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ghaffār Sāhib, Aʿzamgarh.

40. Maulwī Muhammad Naʿīm Sāhib Bukhārī, Kabul.

41. Maulwī Sakhāwat Husayn Sāhib, Orissa.

42. Munshī ʿIrfān Ahmad Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

43. ʿAzīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib, Delhi.

44. Shafīq Ahmad Gangohī, a teacher at Madrasah Sulaymānīyyah, Bhopal.

45. Shāh Muhammad Sāhib, Sarhad.

46. Khwājah Wahīdullāh Sāhib, Rājpūtānah.

47. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Karīm Sāhib, Karnāl.

48. Sayyid Hasan Sāhib, Lucknow.

49. Maulwī Sayyid Hasan Sāhib, a teacher at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

50. Maulwī Masʿūd ʿAlī Sāhib, Aʿzamgarh.

51. Maulwī Hakīm ʿAbd ar-Rashīd Mahmūd Sāhib Ansārī, Gangoh.

52. Maulwī Hakīm Muhammad Masʿūd Sāhib Gangohī, Bombay.

53. Master Manzūr Ahmad Sāhib, Sahāranpūr.

54. Hakīm Bahā' ad-Dīn Sāhib, Hardoi.

55. Zafar Ahmad Sāhib Thānwī, Bombay.

56. Maulwī ʿAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib, Bārah Bankī.

57. Anwār Ahmad Sāhib, Patna.

58. Qurayshī Shafīʿ Muhammad Sāhib, Sindh.

59. Shāh Muhammad Halīm Sāhib, Aʿzamgarh.

THE FINAL WORD

This insignificant servant, Muhammad Shabbīr ʿAlī, the attendant at Khānqāh Imdādīyyah Ashrafīyyah says to his brothers in the Tarīqah that the demise of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Mujjadidul Millat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* was a cause of thousands of sorrows for all his associates. This guide in the Tarīqah, teacher of the Sharīʿah and guide who was unparalleled in today's times has been taken away from this world. In addition to the previously-mentioned qualities which he possessed, he was a physical and personal tutor for me.

A major portion of my life was spent in his service. Hadrat Wālā said to his brother and my father, Munshī Akbar ʿAlī Sāhib Marhūm: "I have no children, so give Shabbīr to me. I will bring him up as my own child." All I can say in this regard is that if Hadrat Wālā had his own children, he would not have brought them up with such pride as he did with me. The fact of the matter is that Hadrat Wālā's acts of kindness to me caused me to even forget about the kindnesses of my own parents. Thousands and thousands of thanks are due to Allāh *taʿālā* that I spent my life with Hadrat Wālā until his very end. Every type of tutor – physical and spiritual – has therefore been taken away from me. My grief is thus a double grief.

للناس هم ولي اليوم همان

People have one grief, but I have a double grief today.

First there was a time when I was living my life under Hadrat Wālā's supervision. Now the time has come for me to proofread and edit the conclusion to Hadrat Wālā's biography. His biography was completed during his lifetime by his khalīfah, Janāb Hājī Khwājah ʿAzīz al-Hasan Sāhib Ghaurī. He was requested to also write on the final days and demise of Hadrat Wālā. Khwājah Sāhib fulfilled this service with intense sorrow and grief, and also with extreme enthusiasm. However, certain incidents and conditions resulted in a continued delay in its completion. Those who know Khwājah Sāhib well are aware that a zealous type of love overwhelms him in whatever task he does. The same applies to this task. First of all, the manuscript could not be completed. When it was completed to a certain

extent, it could neither be edited nor could the scribe transcribe it [because it was illegible]. It was therefore given to him to make it readable.

Khwājah Sāhib came to the Khānqāh in July 1944. The manuscript was being prepared to make it readable but could not be completed. It was decided to send the manuscript and the re-written portions to him so that he could edit them. Khwājah Sāhib and a few others left the Khānqāh on 16 July 1944 for Jālandhar and Amritsar so that they could meet their Punjabi Pīr Bhāis there. They had left specifically to meet Maulānā Khayr Muhammad Sāhib and Maulānā Muhammad Hasan Sāhib.

Who knew that this true lover of Hadrat Wālā is departing from the Khānqāh for the last time! People saw the condition in which Khwājah Sāhib was after the demise of Hadrat Wālā. He was a true lover. He was wandering about from here to there in his desire to meet his beloved. He used to go around quoting the *Malfūzāt* – the message of his beloved – to anyone he met. Khwājah Sāhib was never settled after Hadrat Wālā's demise – today he is Thānah Bhawan, tomorrow in Lucknow, then in A'zamgarh, and then in Sītāpūr. He was going around to Hadrat Wālā's various attendants and special associates in an effort to reduce his grief. The journey to Punjab was for the same reason.

While in Amritsar, Khwājah Sāhib suffered from a fever on 19 July 1944. He first consulted Unani experts [hakīms] and then resorted to doctors. He was diagnosed with pneumonia and was gone extremely weak. He did recover slightly while engaged in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Hasan Sāhib Amritsarī nursed him. There was a slight improvement in his illness and his weakness lessened a bit. He had not recovered completely when Khwājah Sāhib decided to return to his hometown on 5 August 1944. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Hasan Sāhib sent his nephew, Maulwī Muhammad 'Irfān Sāhib, to accompany him on the journey so that he does not experience any discomfort on the way. Khwājah Sāhib reached his hometown, Aurai, on 8 August 1944. He was fatigued by the journey and remnants of his illness were still with him. On reaching Aurai his fever returned and he also developed chest pains. He continued with medical treatment. Eventually this chirping nightingale of the Ashrafī

garden departed from this worldly abode on 17 August 1944 and joined his beloved shaykh. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

Proofreading the conclusion of this biography and describing the final days of Khwājah Sāhib are adding to my grief and sorrow. Khwājah Sāhib described his childhood and early days, how he acquired blessings from Hadrat Wālā, his lineage and family, and all other details related to his life in *Ashraf as-Sawānih*. There is no need to repeat them. The person who reads *Ashraf as-Sawānih* will find details about the shaykh and murīd in one place. When reading the conclusion to the biography, he will also learn about the final days of Khwājah Sāhib.

I had said in the beginning that after preparing a readable copy, I intended sending it to Khwājah Sāhib for proofreading but his appointed time did not allow this. I was eventually forced to give it to Janāb Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafī' Sāhib Deobandī. The Muftī Sāhib read it word for word and made corrections. I then checked it word for word and – all praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* – I found that the incidents and conditions were related most correctly and cautiously. May Allāh *ta'ālā* – through the blessings of Hadrat Wālā – bless us with a good death. May Allāh shower His mercy on the one who says Āmīn.

Shabbīr 'Alī, *may Allāh pardon him.*
Servant of Khānqāh Imdādīyyah, Thānah Bhawan
7 Muharram 1364 A.H.

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Al-hamdulillāh, thumma al-hamdulillāh – all thanks are due solely to Allāh *taʿālā* for having enabled me to complete the English translation of this blessed and inspiring book. I make an earnest duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* to accept this translation, to make it a means for my salvation in this world and the Hereafter, and to include me in the *silsilah* of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *quddisa sirruhu* by virtue of this humble contribution.

أُحِبُّ الصَّالِحِيْنَ وَلَسْتُ مِنْهُمْ – لَعَلَّ اللهَ يَرْزُقُنِيْ صَلاَحَا

I love the righteous although I am not of them. Perhaps Allāh will bestow me with righteousness [by virtue of my love for them].

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes, and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

Was salām
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